

JUN 15 '54

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TILDEN COLLECTION



Mario del Monaco as Turiddu

JUNE, 1954

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VOLUME 20, No. 10





G. SCHIRMER

CHARLES EDWARD IVES

October 20, 1874—May 19, 1954

*An early photograph of the grand old man
of American music*

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The American
**RECORD
GUIDE**



JUNE — 1954

Volume XX, No. 10

formerly **The American Music Lover**

A Prophet Passes

by James Lyons

THE GROUND RULES of the fame game being constant, Charles Edward Ives was a shamefully obscure figure throughout his long life, which ended on May 19th in New York City without exciting any more immediate notice than a brief editorial in *The Herald Tribune* that did not fail to remark on his success in the insurance business.

Ives died in his eightieth year. For fully half of them he had been recognized, in certain circles, as the only authentic revolutionary in the history of American music. But he was neither a poor man nor a vain one, and he did not give a damn about promoting the fruits of his hobby—for composing really was his avocation. Such flagrant flouting of tradition effectively forestalled any demand for his works on the part of the broader public, which is inclined to be sentimental in these matters. His passing may signal a contriteness on all sides and a belated modicum of acceptance as a result, just as happened with Bartók a decade ago. But it is axiomatic that a man gets only what he asks for at best, and Ives asked mostly to be left alone. Posterity could, to its credit, treat firmly with this caprice.

These few paragraphs hardly suffice for a portrait of the man, nor could they begin to provide a perspective on his art. Students are commended to an article by Goddard Lieberson that was published by *Musical America* in February of 1939, years before that astute impresario

reached the highest echelon at Columbia Records. The same journal, in its issue of last February 15th, printed a touching retrospect by Nicolas Slonimsky, who has been an unreconstructed Ivesian for a quarter of a century. Let me quote one passage from the Lieberson study that sums up the Ives legacy with dramatic succinctness:

"In the year 1894, Debussy heard the first performance of his *L'Après-midi d'un faune*; Richard Strauss had plans for a tone-poem to be called *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche*; . . . Arnold Schoenberg was 20 years old and had not yet written *Verklärte Nacht*; Igor Stravinsky was 12 years old and was not to begin serious study of music for seven more years; Alban Berg was doing the things that other nine-year-old boys did in Vienna . . . and in England, the Gilbert and Sullivan repertory, still not quite complete, kept the later Victorians in a constant state of amusement. In the same year, a 20-year-old American composed a song called *Song for Harvest Season*, the words being a stanza from an old hymn, and the music being written for voice, cornet, trombone and organ pedal simultaneously in the keys of E flat, B flat, F, and C . . ."

This is not the place to discuss the polytonality that was to mark the Ivesian style ever after—not to mention his pioneering employment of atonality, microtones, tone clusters, polymeters, polyrhythms, and all the rest of the techniques

ordinarily associated with latter-day composers. Henry and Sidney Cowell now are completing a book on Ives in which these adventures will be exhaustively detailed; Oxford University Press has scheduled it for publication in the fall. For our purposes herewith it is enough to examine the microgroove discography, such as it is—and anyone who fails to infer altruism in these releases is ignorant of LP economics.

A First Volume

Polymusic PRLP-1001 is hopefully entitled *The Music of Charles Ives: Volume One*. A sequel is due within the year, according to Will Lorin of that firm. The "A" side of the current disc includes four orchestral pieces: *Over the Pavements* (which was cast in the omnibus tonality of C-F sharp a full five years before *Petrouchka*); *The Unanswered Question* (which calls for two ensembles and, in actual performance, two conductors); *Hallowe'en* (14 measures three times repeated, with a calculatedly absurd four-measure coda); and *Central Park in the Dark Some Forty Years Ago* (with elevated trains, street bands and pianolas sounding from afar). On the reverse are the *Sonata No. 2* for violin and piano and the *Largo* for violin, piano and clarinet, both lesser works but no less interesting as landmarks in the composer's organically evolving style. The reproduction is studio best, and Vladimir Cherniavsky elicits first class performances from a house ensemble. The chamber pieces are handily turned out by Elliot Magaziner (violin), Frank Glazer (piano), and David Weber (clarinet).

Columbia has recorded both the *Piano Sonata No. 1*, played by William Masselos on ML-4490, and the *No. 2*, played by John Kirkpatrick on ML-4250. The sound of the latter is acceptable; the more recent disc is of course the more lifelike. The respective performances are dedicated in their intensity, as they would have to be if the music were to get across. The *No. 1*, begun in 1902 and completed within that decade, is "in a way a kind of remembrance, and reflection of the country life in some of the Connecticut villages

in the 1880s and 1890s." The *No. 2*, finished in 1915, is subtitled *Concord, Mass., 1840-1860*; hence its popular cognomen, *Concord Sonata*. The four movements are entitled in turn *Emerson, Hawthorne, The Alcotts and Thoreau*. In sum they represent—again quoting the composer—"an attempt to present one person's impression of the transcendentalism . . ." Musically, if not programmatically, the attempt was brilliantly successful. The late Lawrence Gilman deemed it "the greatest music composed by an American, and the most deeply and essentially American in impulse and implication." Gilman's panegyric was not untoward, although Ives did not felicitously compress his conception to the expressive dimensions of the keyboard.

The Society of Participating Artists has released two Ives discs this year. On SPA-9 the soprano Jacqueline Greissle, accompanied by Josef Wolman, sings 10 of roughly 130 songs that constitute at once the sum of Ivesian style and its most accessible manifestation. No such modest sample as this could provide the curious with more than a teasing glimpse of the value of the whole, however, even though 30 years are spanned in the list. Too often Ives fell back on the art song when he was toying with experimental notions, so that one really has to hear more than eight per cent of the literature to know its true value. Also, Miss Greissle does not sing with as much assurance as she might have, and the five songs by Revueletas on the reverse side fare even less well. Can we hope that some idealistic intreprenuer will risk an integrated collection of Ives songs?

Symphony No. 2

We should not, I suppose, look gift horses in the face, but the new recording of *The Symphony No. 2* (SPA-39) is similarly lacking in the kind of conviction that must attend any performance of this composer's music. F. Charles Adler elicits rather confused cooperation from the "Vienna Orchestra" (whatever that is) in this long-awaited disc. Anyone who has heard Leonard Bernstein conduct the New York Philharmonic in this work

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must despair at the reaction that this microgroove run-through is bound to invite. Not only is the orchestra immune to the soul of the music, but the prospective Ivesian will find even less encouragement in the program notes. As is customary in SPA issues, the annotations have absolutely nothing informative to say about the score.

Symphony No. 3

Better treatment all around is given the *Third Symphony*, which has been available for several years on WCFM-1 in a performance by the National Gallery Orchestra of Washington, D. C., under Richard Bales. This is a dated recording, however, and no one would have the temerity to find it musically beyond cavil. It has been suggested by responsible critics that the *Third* needs first of all a rewrite job, not so much to make it more palatable in the sense that impelled Rimsky-Korsakov to lay hands on Mossgorsky, but simply to make his instrumentation say what a good orchestrator supposedly can see that he *wanted* to say. There is much to be said for this view, but I could not concur until first I had heard a performance of the original commensurate with its content. Perhaps it is true that an overhauling could make a *New World* out of this work; I would prefer to hear its own indigenous message presented just as it was meant to be. Now that the *Third* has attained to a certain popularity, it may not be unreasonable to look for a new microgroove version one day soon.

(Both Antal Dorati in Minneapolis and Walter Hendl in Dallas have programmed the *Holidays* symphony in the past season. May we pray for a recording of this remarkable work as well?)

Lyrichord and Period have filled in the most yawning gaps in the chamber music discography, the former with the *No. 1* and *No. 3* of the duo sonatas (LL-17) and the latter with the *String Quartet No. 2* (SPLP-501). Joan Fields and Leopold Mittman are respectively the violinist and pianist of the Lyrichord disc, which needs only a bit of bass boost to put it in a class with today's best sound. Their

collaboration is expert, loving and in every way a benediction. The Walden Quartet also plays superbly on the Period piece—a sad pun indeed because SPLP-501 is no longer in the LP catalogues. It was not a first class recording, to be sure, and there is some solace in the professed determination of William Avar, who controls the Period label, to schedule a new version in the near future. In the meantime anyone who does not know this masterwork is strongly urged to seek out the Walden performance; many stores may have accumulated an extra copy or two.

A Society Release

Another disc not readily available, except to subscribers, is the American Recording Society release (ARS-27) that includes the *Three Places in New England* in a coupling with the *Violin Concerto* of Robert McBride. The McBride work need not concern us here, although it is a perfectly respectable essay of its kind. But the performances that the aforementioned Walter Hendl gets from his pick-up forces is startlingly good. The tableaux comprising the *Three Places* are typically Ivesian in subject matter: *St. Gaudens in Boston Common* (the statuary inspired by Colonel Shaw's valiant Colored Regiment), *General Putnam's Camp, Redding, Connecticut* (hard by the composer's birthplace) and *The Housatonic at Stockbridge* (after the poem by Robert Underwood Johnson). Hendl conducts with infinite attention to the complex and seemingly illogical demands of the score. The results are entirely happy, especially since the engineers were cordially disposed in the bargain. Now *this* is the kind of public relations that the music of Ives must have to get where it belongs—which is in the mind and the heart and the very sinew of our cultural life, and better late than never.

Parenthetically it should be added that one of the last volitional acts of the non-joiner Ives was his formal induction, at his own behest, into the American Composers Alliance. It was as if he were impelled, after so many years of con-

(Continued on page 343)

ENCORE BERLIOZ . . .

BERLIOZ: *Symphonic Fantastique, Op. 14*; the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. Westminster LP WL-5268, \$5.95.

▲NEW insights are expected as a matter of course when Hermann Scherchen essays a standard repertory piece. No other conductor of our time has so consistently demonstrated such quality of mind, and this commanding intellectuality almost invariably reveals some previously unsuspected logic in whatever masterwork upon which it is focused. His temperament, however, is in no wise the Gallic temperament, and it is undoubtedly for this reason that he slips a vital cog in scaling the heights of the *Fantastique*. All of the notes are there, as precisely as the composer ordered them. The rub, of course, is that the composer did not order them any too precisely. He reasonably assumed a *rapport* that is automatic in certain conductors, most of them French. The piercing penetration of a Scherchen seeks out every secret of the notation, and exposes them, too, but they never take wing as they do, say, at the behest of a Munch or a Monteux. In short, this performance must be accounted edifying and even profound, but not quite in the esthetic spirit of the thing. The passionate fancies of this music invite a conductor's emotional identification, or at the least his sincerest sympathy; any interpretation that would rectify its inherent incoherence, even one as fascinating as Scherchen's, somehow misses the point. This does not mean, needless to add, that admirers of the *Fantastique* are directed elsewhere. The listener's temperament, too, will be a

factor. There can be no cavil with the performance on executive grounds, certainly, and the recorded sound provides a phenomenally realistic orchestral presence.

—J.L.

. . . AND MENDELSSOHN

MENDELSSOHN: *Symphony No. 3 in A Minor, Op. 56 (Scotch)* and *Symphony No. 5 in D, Op. 107 (Reformation)*; the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. Columbia LP ML-4864, \$5.95.

▲HYPERBOLE rarely is called for when Mitropoulos dips into the Romantic repertory. But I submit that these performances are great performances in every reasonable sense of that outworn word. At least the *Scotch* is. And it seems to me that any conductor who can disguise the seams of the *Reformation* merits some kind of medal. The *Scotch* always has been one of his favorites, as Philharmonic subscribers will attest. Why he does it so very well, the while butchering so many other warhorses of the same vintage, poses one of the more fascinating problems in New York concert life. I have heard him do a somewhat better *Scotch* than this one, truth be told, but even at that it is a more loving recreation of the work's elusive charm than I have heard on records. And the *Reformation* is suffused with a kind of messianic drive that imparts all of the music's inherent religiosity without resorting to bombast—an achievement not matched by earlier microgroove versions. The sound is tip-top. Clearly a sensational buy, coupling-wise and otherwise.

—J.L.

THE AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE, published at Pelham, N.Y. Editorial Office: 115 Reed Ave. Business Office: Room 11, Post Office Bldg.

●Peter Hugh Reed, Editor; James Lyons, C. J. Luten, James Norwood, Associates; Philip L. Miller, Harold C. Shonberg, Donald Richie, Max de Schauensee, Phil Hart, Anson W. Peckham, Contributors. Paul Girard, Advertising and Circulation. Julius J. Spector, Art Editor.

●Published on the tenth of each month. The American Record Guide, sells at 35¢ a copy. Annual subscription in the U.S.A. and Canada, \$3.50. In all foreign countries, \$4.00.

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●Correspondence must be accompanied by return postage.

●Reentered as 2nd class matter July 1, 1953 at the Post Office at New Rochelle, N.Y. under the act of March 3, 1879. Additional re-entry at Post Office, Easton, Pa., June, 1950. (Contents copyright 1953 by Peter Hugh Reed.)

INTIMATE ENSEMBLES

▼
CHOPIN: *Trio in G minor, Op. 8*; **SCHUMANN:** *Trio No. 2 in F, Op. 80*; Trio di Bolzano. Vox LP PL-8480, \$5.95.

STRADELLA: *Six Trio Sonatas*; Trio di Bolzano. Vox LP PL-8380, \$5.95.

DVORAK: *Piano Quartet in E flat, Op. 87*; **JANACEK:** *String Quartet No. 2 (Intimate Letters)*; Galimir Quartet. Stradivari LP 619, \$5.95.

LALO: *Quartet in E flat, Op. 45*; **GOUNOD:** *Quartet No. 3 in A minor*; **DONIZETTI:** *Quartet No. 1 in E flat*; Perinen String Quartet. Stradivari LP 618, \$5.95.

MENDELSSOHN: *Quartet in E minor, Op. 44, No. 2*; *Quartet in E flat, Op. 44, No. 3*; Endres String Quartet. Stradivari LP 615, \$5.95.

MOZART: *Quartet No. 20 in D, K. 499*; *Quartet No. 21 in D, K. 575*; Juilliard Quartet. Columbia LP ML-4863, \$5.95.

MOZART: *Quintet in C, K. 515*; Barylli Quartet with Wilhelm Huebner (2nd violin). Westminster LP 5271, \$5.95.

SMETANA: *Quartet No. 1 in E minor (Aus meinen Leben)*; **KODALY:** *Quartet No. 2, Op. 10*; Végh Quartet. London LP LL-865, \$5.95.

▲ THE Bolzano Trio are typically Italian musicians, tending to artistic gentility rather than intensity or fervor. This threesome betray the sunny disposition of lyrically loving Italian musicians, who play because they like to make music. One relaxes to their performances—a condition that can result in diminishing

concentration if one is not heedful. In the ingratiating Schumann *Trio*, one feels that more passion at times would have helped an otherwise sound performance. In many ways, this trio is more appealing than the better known *D minor*. As to the Chopin, a work of its composer's eighteenth year, it has plenty of charm and some lovely melodies but it seems closer related to the salon than the concert hall. Its long first movement lacks tonal variety; its *Adagio* lacks depth. Huneker has summed up this work: "Its classicism may be disputed, nevertheless it contains lovely music." Chopin was born to create lovely music, much of it more compelling than this early opus. The string writing here is adept, though Chopin contended that since he seldom used the first string of the violin, he believed the viola would serve the trio more advantageously. The performance would have benefited from more ardor.

Allessandro Stradella (1645-1682) was a highly respected composer of his time whose trio-sonatas are said to have influenced Purcell. An all around gifted musician, Stradella was also a renowned violinist and a greatly admired singer. Though he wrote operas, concertos and much sacred music which gained a reputation for him, little seems to have survived. The present works were acquired from the library at Modena, where they have long reposed. Though well written, these works hardly own a striking profile. One is inclined to concur with the 18th-century critic, Charles Burney, who said, in speaking of Purcell: "Carissimi and Stradella, if more polished in their style, were certainly less varied, and knew still less of instruments, than our countrymen." Of course, these trio-sonatas were not intended for modern strings and the piano, but for viols and harpsichord. They might prove more enchanting if performed on the older instruments. The Bolzano Trio plays them smoothly and expressively. The recording in the above works is excellent without being startling realistic, which is hardly desirable in music of this kind.

Dvorak's second *Piano Quartet* and Janacek's *Second Quartet* are most welcome

additions to the LP chamber literature. Janacek, one of the foremost Czech composers of his day (1854-1928), possessed a creative originality which related him to the 20th-century moderns, despite the fact that he never resorted to atonal writing. I had occasion to write about this quartet back in 1948, in a survey of Czech Chamber Music, from an excellent performance by the Czech String Quartet. At the time, I had no first-hand knowledge of its programmatic significance, which is supplied in the present notes, though I noted that its moods suggested meditation or reflection on past experiences. The work has been variously called *Love Letters*, *Souvenirs of Pisek* or *Intimate Letters*. Here, we are told Janacek ruled out the former "to avoid embarrassing comments by fools." The quartet was inspired by his attachment to a much younger woman. Its four movements concern the lady and his attachment. Actually, there is no true program, rather, each movement is a reflection of a mood felt or sustained. Its thematic material is attractive and, like all of this composer's music, individual. Its varied rhythms are both subtle and forceful, and its harmony is deftly colored and often pungent. This is a work that grows on one and is well worth cultivating. The Dvorak *Quartet* is a delight from start to finish. It ranks with his *E flat Piano Quintet*, *Op. 81*, which is better known. Virility and tenderness characterize its contrasting moods. Neither sentimentality or melancholy are present. It is elated throughout, with lovely melodies and bright colors in the instrumentation. Its workmanship is perfect. The Galimir ensembles (a pianist takes over for the second violin in the Dvorak) perform both these works valiantly, though the playing is not always as smooth as it might have been. Galimir's violin tends to dominate on occasion and some of the ensemble playing tends to roughness. Sometimes, in the Dvorak, the continuity is disturbed by musical semicolons. There is, however, plenty of musical competence to assure enjoyment of the players' musical endeavors.

Lalo's *Quartet* is less known in this

country than in France. It is a typically Gallic product of its time (1855), romantic in mood, yet full of life, rhythmic spontaneity and a certain elegance. The Gounod work is a salon piece; its opening movement sounds like a workout for a group of amateurs, but the other movements are well enough made. However, Gounod would never have gained any fame through this opus, even though it boasts a fugal section. The Donizetti *Quartet* is a product of his student days, which sounds a little like Boccherini in his weaker moments. In its way, it is first-rate salon music, agreeable to the ears and mildly diverting. The Perinen Quartet, apparently French, plays the Lalo with more *élan* than polish. This group seem to have a well knit ensemble and a healthy, straightforward musical bent which excludes sentimental stress. It has been well recorded in a close-mike type of technique, with no undue reverberation.

Of the two Mendelssohn quartets, the *E flat* is more often heard than the *E minor*. The latter is a first recording anywhere. Only the scherzo was issued preciously on 78 rpm. Most players with whom I have talked regard the *E minor* as less effective than the *E flat*, and not rewarding enough in the concert hall except for its ingenious, elfin-like scherzo. The *E flat* is a big work, almost orchestral in its proportions. It has been performed by the Curtis Quartet with the most popular of Mendelssohn's quartets—the *E flat*, *Op. 12* (Westminster 5220). The Endres Quartet is an unfamiliar group to me. Judging from its names, it is of German origin. The players are a well-schooled group, well coordinated, with pleasing tonal quality but little coloristic contrast. In comparison, I think the Curtis ensemble achieve more rhythmic freedom in the *Op. 44, No. 3*. However, since musical competence prevails, the Endres' performance of the neglected *E minor* is in their favor, for this work has—besides its effective scherzo (the indelible watermark of its composer) a fine slow movement and an effective dance-like finale. The recording here is clear, but somewhat boxed in sound.

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The two Mozart quartets were issued some time back on one disc (Philharmonia 105) in performances by that musically proficient foursome, the Stuyvesant Quartet. This duplication of that coupling suggests a challenge from the equally proficient Juilliard Quartet. The fine playing of both groups has its points of challenge, yet none too serious to mitigate the admiration of either group's admirers. One can believe that both ensembles have lived a long time with these works and carefully rehearsed them. There is a fine sense of give and take in the playing of both, and a well adjusted balance between the instruments. In the first and third movements of *K. 499*, one of Mozart's loveliest, and also in the first and second movements of the *K. 575*, the Juilliard Quartet have a more gracious feeling for the *Allegretto* markings than do the Stuyvesants, who tend to pace these movements on the fast side, though their technical facilities allow smooth sailing. In the slow movements, notably the *Adagio* of *K. 499*, the Stuyvesants substantiate best the contemplative qualities of the music. The Roth Quartet has also played these works on a single disc (Mercury 10133), but their performances lack essential polish and pitch security and are not of the same musical quality of the Stuyvesant or Juilliard Quartets. To make a decision between the two latter may be difficult since both groups are equally well recorded with an excellent balance between the instruments.

The Barylli Quartet is certainly one of the finest chamber groups emanating from modern Vienna. Since this group first appeared on records, it has progressed in homogeneity of color and style. In Mozart's great *C major Quintet*, the Barylli foursome, joined by another violist, perform with unfettered freedom, uniformity of style and singing rhythmic lines. The dynamic graduations are well calculated and the music unfolds with disarming simplicity and true musical assurance, which is a tribute to the players as well as the engineers. For the recording merits here are completely in their favor—the sound is bright, clean and exceptionally well balanced without the thick reverber-

ation which is remiss in Mozart, heard in other Viennese ensemble recordings. Though there is often more subtlety and dramatic tension in the Budapest group's performance, the poor recording dubbed from 78 is so badly monitored that the performance is not truly representative of its players. The Pascal group do not have the winged freedom of the Baryllis, nor as fine recording, hence this latest issue takes precedence at this time.

London has been more successful in its recordings of the Végh Quartet, especially in regard to tonal qualities. This issue of the Smetana and Kodály find this gifted foursome handsomely served. Of the several versions of the Smetana, the Curtis group offers the Végh Quartet the keenest competition, though the sound in the Curtis is almost too full and sonorous. High fidelity is apt to retard intimacy which belongs by right to the string quartet. Of course, the Szell-Cleveland Orchestra performance is another matter—here the massed strings demands a rich sonority and fullness of utterance. The Végh Quartet play the Smetana and Kodály with remarkable precision and exceptional expressive feeling for their varying moods. In the *Largo* of the Smetana, this group probes its pathos deeper than any other ensemble, while in the quicker movements the Curtis Quartet achieves the greater spontaneity. In February of 1952, Lyricord issued a recording of the Kodály, linked with Szymanowski's *C major Quartet*, well played by the Walden Quartet. The Végh group give a more searching account of Kodály's music, especially in its melancholic and often tragic opening movement. Couplings may govern a listener's choice. However, the Szymanowski is a work decidedly worth knowing.

Mr. Burgin, concertmaster of the Boston Symphony, and three of his associates have formed what promises to be a first-rate quartet, provided that they are given better recording than they receive in this disc. There is a lack of room resonance, the sort of balance which does not give all four voices equal rights (Mr. Burgin's violin dominates the ensemble), and clarity of line. This being my first

acquaintance with Tchaikovsky's third quartet, I cannot speak knowingly about the performance. I have the feeling that a bit more reverberation and better placement of the mike would have done the players more justice. The ensemble seems too closely knit, too tonally tight. Despite the recording sound, this disc is worth acquiring, since it permits one to become acquainted with Tchaikovsky's finest work in its form. It was written in memory of Ferdinand Laub, a member of the Moscow String Quartet and close friend of the composer. Hence, its third movement is in part a funeral march, deeply personal in its elegaic expression. The work opens with a slow introduction in which the funeral march is forecast. The *Allegro molto*, which follows, seems rather complex on first hearing, but the succeeding scherzo is a winning piece in which the violist has a solo. The finale lifts the gloom of the slow section with its appropriate boldness now in the major mode. Though Tchaikovsky never grasped the real chamber music style, his original tonal coloring and his melodic gifts make his chamber music engaging. —P.H.R.

OPERA SPOTLIGHT



BEETHOVEN: *Fidelio*—*Abscheulicher wollest du hin?*; **WAGNER:** *Tristan und Isolde*—*Liebested*; Martha Moedl (soprano) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Artur Rother. Telefunken TM 68003, ten-inch, \$2.95.

WAGNER: *Tristan und Isolde*—*Love duet*; Martha Moedl (soprano), Johanna Blatter (mezzo-soprano) and Wolfgang Windgassen (tenor) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Artur Rother. Telefunken LGX 66-004, \$2.95.

GLUCK: *Orfeo ed Euridice*—*Ach, ich habe sie verloren*; **VERDI:** *Don Carlos*—*Verhaengnis-voll war das Geschehn*; *Macbeth*—*Dieser Flecken kommt immer wieder*; *Nun sinkt der Abend*; Martha Moedl, (soprano) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Hans

Loewlein. Telefunken TM 68009, ten-inch, \$2.95.

▲**MARTHA MOEDL** will be remembered as the excellent Kundry in London's Bayreuth *Parsifal* recording. She gives in this collection of dramatic scenes something of a measure of her present abilities, and betrays the fact, both by repertory and by vocal quality, that she was once listed among the contraltos. Hers is a rich and ample voice, not quite easy, perhaps, in some of the highest flights, and occasionally a trifle fluttery in the medium, but always impressive because of the splendid musical and dramatic intellect evident in everything she does. Her singing is always absorbing; she doesn't allow your mind to wander. I found myself hanging on every word of the Beethoven recitative, and if the ending of the scene was taxing to her voice, this did not seem important. Surely here is one of the best *Liebesteds* on records, despite the fact that the voice is always too well on top of the orchestra. The same criticism holds for the *Love duet*, where the singers have to carry far too much of the burden. I am not sure whether I should blame the recording balance or a lack of spark in the conductor for a certain matter-of-factness in the otherwise fine singing. The great Gluck aria, of course, offers no problems and the Verdi scenes are thrilling. *O don fatale* is the ideal vehicle for a transposed soprano; it calls for vocal weight, but contraltos usually meet their Waterloo in the high ending. Moedl sings this and the great sleep-walking scene of Lady Macbeth with such conviction that the German translation seems quite acceptable. —P.L.M.

MASCAGNI: *Cavalleria Rusticana* (complete); Maria Meneghini Callas (Santuzza), Anna Maria Canelli (Lola), Ebe Ticozzi (Lucia), Giuseppe di Stefano (Turiddu), Rolando Panerai (Alfio), Orchestra and Chorus of the La Scala Opera House, Milan, conducted by Tullio Serafin. Angel LP set 3509, 3 sides, \$9.90.

MASCAGNI: *Cavalleria Rusticana* (complete); Elena Nicolai (Santuzza), Laura Didier (Lola), Anna Maria Anelli (Lucia), Mario del Monaco (Turiddu), Aldo Protti (Alfio), Symphony Orchestra and Chorus (Milan), conducted by Franco Ghione; and **Operatic Recital:** *Loreley*—*Nel verde maggio* (Catalani); *Il Tabarro*—*Hai ben ragione* (Puccini); *Andrea Chenier*—*Un di all'azzurro spazio* (Giordano); *La Fanciulla del West*—*Or son sei mesi* (Puccini); *Turandot*—*Nessun dorma!* (Puccini); *La Boheme*—*Che gelida manina* (Puccini); Mario del Monaco with same orchestra and conductor. London LP set LL-990-991, \$11.90.

▲ THERE are now seven LP performances of Mascagni's popular operatic melodrama, each of which has its artistic merits. These are governed by and large by the appeal of the two main participants—Santuzza and Turiddu. Opera on records these days brings us singers assigned to leading roles which they have not sung in the opera house, or else have sung only a few times. It is a mistake to expect such artists to achieve their best results until they have lived with a characterization for a time in the opera house. Neither Gigli nor di Stefano nor Bjorling ever sang Turiddu in this country. Of the three, di Stefano seems best equipped for the part, though even he tends to strain his naturally fine lyric tenor voice at times and Bjorling, for all his artistic accomplishments, does not sing the role easily. Considering its taxing demands, Gigli does well enough though some of his singing reminds us of his age. Tucker handles the role convincingly but with insufficient ardor. As for Mario del Monaco, he has the vocal equipment to sing almost any role, if not always fully satisfying at least with vocal assurance. And so it goes. Caruso in his time sang a fine Turiddu, though he gave up the role early in his career.

Of all the recorded versions of this opera, the new Angel has the best orchestral direction. Serafin's performance has everything—dramatic tension, fervor and imagination. He takes all sorts of liberties



Maria Meneghini Callas

with tempi in a surprisingly effective way. Mascagni's conducting was lethargic at times; the whole opera was paced too slowly, the work of a tired old man. The rest of the conductors are competent in varying degrees but somewhat self-effacing, except Ghione who has more thrust which keeps the drama moving.

When it comes to recording, honors cannot be divided for the engineering in the London and Angel sets is as realistically impressive as in the Columbia and Victor ones. As Santuzza, Callas has some outstanding movements and some lesser ones. I am not convinced that she has completely penetrated or rounded out her characterization as yet, though the role should be a natural for her. She recalls Rosa Raisa with her dominant personality and vocal plenitude. Her singing of the *Easter Hymn* lacks ingratiating tonal quality. Of the sopranos, Margaret Harshaw sings the *Hymn* with the most prevailing beauty of tone and refinement. Milanov is next in line. As for the contralto Elena Nicolai, she sounds rather mature for Santa, and her high tones are not her strongest forte. But she is a gifted artist, who knows how to act with her voice. In the two duets, Callas is more convincing; her curse at the end of the

duet with Turiddu is dramatically realistic. Nicolai resorts here to spoken melodrama.

Mario del Monaco's Turiddu suggests, for all the world, a young athlete. He tosses off the *Siciliano* with robust fervor. The swaggering Turiddu never swaggered more convincingly. Here is the male animal in all his glory, with high tones tossed out with ever increasing impetuosity and forcefulness. Judging from his picture on the cover of the set, I would say that del Monaco would make quite a figure as Turiddu and with his robust singing bring down the house. The Turiddu of di Stefano is less impetuous. Paneria's Alfio is vocally more sonorous than Protti's, and more convincing than Merrill's. The roles of Lola and Lucia are entrusted to competent singers and the chorus in both sets is excellent. I suspect the same chorus was employed in both cases.

Angel releases its set on three sides. Its booklet is the most comprehensive supplied with any set, offering among other things a translation by D. H. Lawrence of the original short story by Giovanni Verga from which the libretto of the opera was taken. This is decidedly an interesting innovation. London fills up its fourth record face with an operatic recital by its star tenor. Since del Monaco has not as yet learned to sing softly, some of these arias are less successful than others. Vocally, he can handle almost any assignment, but he should learn to be more prodigal with his naturally fine voice. —P.H.R.

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MOUSSORGSKY: *The Marriage*; Nicolas Agroff (Podolessine); Charlotte Desmazes (Fiokla); Jean Mollien (Kotchikarew); Alexandre Popovitzky (Stepan); L'Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris, conducted by René Leibowitz. Oceanic OCS 36, \$5.95.

▲THIS is a curious work. Based on a tale of Gogol, the little opera was not completed by Moussorgsky. Though the second and third acts were supplied by Ippolitov-Ivanov, only Moussorgsky's 322

part is included here. The orchestration is attributed to Antoine Duhamel.

The melody-lover will not find much here to delight him. Practically nothing happens, except several long dialogues, and as the text is sung in Russian, there is not much for the casual listener to take hold of. Nicolas Agroff, in the chief role, displays a large, somewhat Chaliapinlike voice, and he seems to deliver his lines well. The others join in the spirit of the occasion. My own most interesting reaction was that, though I do not understand the language, it seemed to me this was really heightened speech—music that follows the inflection of the words with unusual fidelity. Mr. Leibowitz gives a good clean exposition of the score. —P.L.M.

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POULENC: *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* (complete); Denise Duval (Thérèse and The Card Reader), Jean Giraudeau (The Husband); supporting singers and the Chorus and Orchestra of the *Théâtre National de L'Opéra-Comique* conducted by André Cluytens. Angel LP 35090 \$5.95 (boxed) or \$4.95.

▲ONE doesn't know whether to laugh or cry at the absurd Guillaume Apollinaire plot, but there is no denying the musical merits of the farcical *opéra-bouffe* (in a prologue and two acts) that Poulenc fashioned from it. Presumably the topical aspects of the work, what with the sexes trading in both their accoutrements and their prerogatives, accounts in part for the current revival. Be that as it may, the sorry decadence underlying the saucy story line is glossed over with infinite skill in Poulenc's ever fresh and delightful music, which is just as felicitous for the voices as it is for the orchestra. For reasons that will be obvious to anyone who reads the libretto, *Les Mamelles* has not been taken into the repertory of our lyric theater, but it would be cavalier indeed to suggest that there is no place for it on records. Angel is due thanks for its intrepidity, not to say temerity, in thus introducing the piece so brilliantly to the broader public. All of the singers, from the leads to the least important,

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are entirely in the spirit of the thing. The sound is fifth row center. Cluytens, who gave us such a logy *Faust*, now surprises with a sustained vivacity that is downright delicious. The *élan* he elicits from the *Comique* pit will amaze those who have often deplored the low estate of this ensemble over the years.

—J.L.

Delius at his best . .



DELIUS: *Eine Messe des Lebens* (A Mass of Life); Rosina Raisbeck (soprano); Monica Sinclair (contralto); Charles Craig (tenor); Bruce Boyce (baritone) with London Philharmonic Choir and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. Columbia SL 197, 2 discs, \$11.90.

▲THIS massive work, based on a text by Nietzsche, dates from 1904-5, but has rarely been heard, largely because of the enormous difficulties it offers its performers. Many Delians consider it the supreme masterpiece of their composer; surely it must be the largest and most ambitious. Now that we at last have a chance to hear it, the score is no less than overwhelming. I am tempted to dwell on many details of the work, but will content myself with a few: the quiet, peaceful intermezzo called *Auf den Bergen*, the wonderful outburst at *Herauf! nun herauf du grosser Mittag*, the introduction to part 4, and the almost Mahlerian ending, *O Mensch! gib acht!*—these are things to come back to many times. It is no news, of course, that these moments are illuminated by Beecham as no one else could have done, and that the performance is an unforgettably moving experience. Chorus and orchestra are splendid. The latter is closer to us in the recording, which makes for a certain diffusion in the chorus, but not for a lack of clarity. The most important of the soloists is Bruce Boyce, a singer of fine intelligence, but with a voice beginning to sound a little frayed. Monica Sinclair is a real find, with her lovely, rich tone. For the rest the singing is good, and the diction unusually so, considering the

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almost Beethovenian demands of the vocal writing. I noted some surface noise in the record.

—P.L.M.

Another Schnabel



SCHNABEL: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*; Helen Schnabel, Vienna Orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler; *Ten Songs*; Erika Francoulon (soprano) and Helen Schnabel (piano); SPA LP 35, \$5.95.

▲THESE works were composed by the late Artur Schnabel during his 20th to 22nd years (1900-02). They all reveal a searching for poetic expression which prevailed in his piano playing through the years. While the influence of Richard Strauss is apparent, there is sufficient individuality to sustain interest. After 1914, Schnabel's compositions were written in the atonal style. A born musician, Schnabel began his piano studies at seven. His concerto is in two movements—*Intermezzo-Andante Grave* and *Rondo-Allegretto grazioso*. The first movement is the most persuasive with its poetic feeling and its skillfully balanced piano and orchestral parts. The *Rondo* lacks spontaneity and seems a bit disjointed for all its lovely moments. Schnabel's early lieder are close to Strauss with their elaborate piano parts which his daughter-in-law plays with great skill and feeling. Erika Francoulon sings them with evident personal vehemence and affection. Hers is a good soprano voice which would have been better served if she had been less close to the microphone. It is the persuasive musicianship of Helen Schnabel, with its unquestionable devotion to the composer, and the work of F. Charles Adler which distinguishes this record. Those who have admired the artistry of Artur Schnabel will have a new insight into his personality, worth investigating, in this music of his early years. One could write at length on his choice of poems and his treatment of them but suffice it to say that his lieder are worthy of the respect of singers who are not unwilling to share honors with their accompanist. The omission of translations of the songs is deplorable.

—P.H.R.

Record Notes and Reviews

THERE IS IN SOULS a sympathy with sounds, and as the mind is pitched the ear is pleased with melting airs or martial, brisk or grave; some chord in unison with what we hear is touched within us, and the heart replies.

—William Cowper

Orchestra

AMERICAN LIFE: *Holiday Set* (North), *Sunday in Brooklyn* (Siegmeister), *Music Hall Overture* (Jacobi), *McKonkey's Ferry Overture* (Antheil) and *Saturday Night at the Firehouse* (Cowell); the Vienna Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler. SPA LP 47, \$5.95.

▲MINOR Americana, to put it as euphemistically as possible. The Siegmeister piece is well made but musically inconsequential. The works by Antheil and Cowell are souvenirs of their own past (McKonkey's Ferry was the point at which Washington is supposed to have crossed the Delaware) and both composers have recently done far more edifying things. North's little essays are diverting, but only the first time around. The performances are a bit ragged, the recording rather dead. —J.L.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 4 in B Flat Major, Op. 60*; the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Josef Krips. London LP LL-915, \$5.95.

▲HAVING issued a superb *Fifth* and an equally superb *Pastorale* in recent months,

London now offers a *Fourth* that challenges the dozen competitive versions in the catalogue. Interpretatively this latest is not as searching as Toscanini's, as persuasive as Monteux's, or as ebullient as Beecham's, but it is neither mannered nor plodding and the recorded sound is easily the best of the entire lot. The economy minded will resent its sprawling across two sides (the Toscanini and Walter performances each are coupled with the *Second*) but there is something to be said for avoiding the last half-inch or so of cutting surface and no one could object to this notion when the results are so happy as they are in the instance at hand. The Concertgebouw plays with its wonted perfection, and Krips is at pains to be unobtrusive in his efficiency, which is a sensible policy with Beethoven. —J.L.

BIZET: *L'Arlésienne Suites Nos. 1 and 2; La Jolie Fille de Perth Suite*; *L'Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française* conducted by André Cluytens. Angel LP 35048, \$5.95 (boxed) or \$4.95.

▲THIS recording deservedly won a *Grand Prix du Disque*. The surfaces are clean as a whistle and the sound is spacious and beautifully balanced across an amply wide range. The performances are a

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revelation. In the anonymous notes we are reminded of Nietzsche's saying that "Bizet is a composer of genius who discovered a new land: the Midi of music." One is impelled to add that Cluytens reveals this distinctly Provençal quality as poetically and as convincingly as any other conductor has done. Cluytens makes these scores come alive with that special kind of melodrama that lends the literary Midi a quality all its own. His tempi are irritating at first, but the listener soon discerns that they are perfectly calibrated for the most cohesive unfoldment of the plot that lends the music its substance. I strongly commend those who think of the *L'Arlésienne Suites* only as "semi-classical" pot boilers to address their ears to this handsomely wrought conception. As to *La Jolie Fille de Perth*, the London performance is equally admirable and just as well recorded; its couplings are the Chabrier *Suite Pastorale* and *Jeux d'Enfants*. I shouldn't worry unduly about the duplication if you happen to own the London disc, however, because it accounts for only a quarter of the total playing time in either case.

—J.L.

CAPLET: *Conte Fantastique*; **McDONALD:** *Suite from Childhood*; Ann Mason Stockton (harp) and the Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Felix Slatkin. Capitol LP disc P-8255, \$5.70.

▲THE SUCCESS of Capitol's superb recording of Ravel's *Introduction and Allegro* and Debussy's *Danses Sacrée and Profane*, featuring the fine harpist Ann Mason Stockton, has probably been the motivating force in the release of this new disc. Recorded in a close, crisp manner, this issue reinforces the view that the good harp literature is scanty indeed. *The Suite from Childhood*, based on some English folk tunes, by the manager of the Philadelphia Orchestra, is slick, lifeless, and without any kind of personal distinction. The Caplet piece, inspired by Edgar Allan Poe's *Mask of the Red Death*, is directionless and primarily concerned with manipulating of sonorities.

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Scored for string quartet and harp, the music is presented here with a tripled string force. Miss Stockton performs with technical mastery and good musical style, and she is supported well enough.

—C.J.L.

FRANCK: *Symphony in D Minor*; the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwaengler. London LP LL-967, \$5.95.

▲THE unpredictable Furtwaengler all but overtakes Paray, whose Detroit-Mercury performance has been the exemplar. Furtwaengler runs hot and cold these days; you never know what to expect from him. This *D Minor* is one of the happiest surprises of the phonographic spring. There is virtually none of the censurable rubati that so often disfigures this venerable but vulnerable work. One hesitates, at the same time, to write it off as "straightforward." Call it, rather, a German Romantic conception of a French Romantic score. It flies more like an eagle than a seagull, which is to say that it is less passionate than impassioned if that distinction is valid, but all of the poetry is intact. In short, the most effective non-French interpretation I have heard. The sound is spacious enough to encompass all of the stacked-up sonorities.

—J.L.

HARRISON: *Suite for Violin, Piano and Small Orchestra*; **WEBER:** *Symphony on Poems of William Blake*, Op. 33; Anahid and Maro Ajemian (pianos, in the former), Warren Galtour (baritone, in the latter) and an orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. RCA Victor LP LM-1785, \$5.72.

▲THE American Composers Alliance subsidized this coupling of two amazingly disparate contemporary pieces. Both are superbly performed by all concerned and the reproductive quality is on a par with recent New Orthophonic releases. The *Suite* of Lou Harrison is an engaging essay in the Balinese manner, full of piquant jangling and lacy gamelan figurations

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that will enthrall the high fidelity addict and the orientalist as well as the general listener. Its final *Chorale* is a neat merger of Eastern and Western modes, at once Asian, contrapuntal, medieval and modern. Ben Weber's *Symphony* is a twelve tone product, uncompromisingly intellectual and neither compelling nor edifying on short acquaintance. The program annotator, Peggy Glanville-Hicks of *The New York Herald Tribune*, says of it: "Atonalism is indeed the 'lost generation' style in music, and, as such, of course it has quite a following. Mr. Weber's work should appeal to all these." A succinct appraisal, whether or not it was meant to be. —J.L.

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HONEGGER: *Symphony No. 2; RIVIER:* *Symphony No. 2*; the M-G-M String Orchestra conducted by Izler Solomon. M-G-M LP E-3104, \$4.85.

▲**INGRATIATING** is not the word for Honegger's grim souvenir of wartime Paris, but I must admit that it wears well on the strength of its sheer craftsmanship. This performance emphasizes the work's structural excellences more pointedly than did the recent Concert Hall version by a Rochester ensemble. The trumpet solo at the end is magnificently done; surely the anonymous artist is Harry Glantz. The coupling is an improvement over Hunter Johnson's *Piano Concerto*, which shares the competitive disc. Jean Rivier is one of the ascendant stars in the French firmament. His string writing is superbly idiomatic without once compromising its essentially modern (if not strikingly original) personality. The architecture is Bartókian, mingled with the best traditions of French academicism. Withal an engaging essay in absolutism, and the fact that it is music for its own sake, with no program attached, already lends it a distinction in this heyday of creative interdependency. The pick-up instrumentalists are first class, articulating as one throughout, and the engineers have provided especially fine sound. —J.L.

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MOZART: *Divertimento in B flat, K. 287*; Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska with Jan Tomasow (violin). Vanguard LP disc VRS-444, \$5.95.

▲THIS beautiful work is one of Mozart's most inspired inventions. It is good to have it at last in such a warm, clear-toned recording in which all the detail can be appreciated. The performance is very good, too, except for an unusually slow tempo in the penultimate section of the final movement. It has ease, grace, and refinement of sound. What is missing in Prohaska's direction is the continuous tension in the quiet flow of sound that made Toscanini's poorly recorded version of this music (and in particular the wondrous fourth movement) something of a miracle. —C.J.L.

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MOZART: *Divertimento No. 17 in D, K.334*; Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet with Josef Hermann, (double bass), Hans and Othmar Berger (horns). Westminster LP disc WL-5276, \$5.95.

▲**CLEAR**, lustrous sound only emphasizes the absence of any energy or momentum in this plodding performance. Ease and a certain sweetness these Viennese players project, but no sparkle, no verve, no spontaneity for this joyous music. Prohaska, Tomasow, and associates on Vanguard 441 do this work better justice. —C.J.L.

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MOZART: *Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550*; **HAYDN:** *Symphony No. 94 in G (Surprise)*; Arturo Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony Orchestra. RCA Victor LP Lm-1789, \$5.45.

▲**THERE** are three reasons why these performances rank among the greatest on records. First, the wonderfully realistic reproduction, in which there is the proper amount of reverberation appropriate to the music of Mozart and Haydn. Second, the superb playing of the NBC Symphony which, on second thought, makes one want to drop a tear remem-

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bering that this orchestra has been disbanded because of Toscanini's retirement. Third, the performances of Toscanini, which are superb, notably that of the Mozart *G minor*. Long familiar with several versions of this symphony by the Maestro through the years. I find this one the most satisfying. I have long known Toscanini's thoughts on this symphony, having done an article on them for a national magazine nine years ago. He told me at that time that he regarded the third movement of the *G minor* as the most tragic minuet ever written. Most conductors miss the tragic note in this symphony, just as they do in the *E flat*. During the 19th century, the *G minor* was performed in a namby-pamby manner which robbed it of its underlying pathos and its dramatic tension. Toscanini has always affirmed these qualities but not as convincingly as he does in this latest recording. Here, we find emphasis without urgency in his performance. The initial theme of the opening movement is more relaxed, thus heightening his proper emphasis on the dramatic tension of the second theme. The slow movement has expressive poise; the minuet has expressive drama. In the finale, Toscanini achieves essential dramatic tension without undue intensity. No one, to my way of thinking, affirms the passionate melancholy of this symphony in a comparably telling manner, not even Beecham, whose rendition has its otherwise winning qualities.

As for the Haydn, both the musical shaping of the performance and the fine playing of the orchestra makes of it a memorable experience. It is the best Haydn symphony performance that Toscanini has given us since his memorable version of the "Clock" with the N. Y. Philharmonic back in 1929. —P.H.R.

MUSSORGSKY-RAVEL: *Pictures at an Exhibition*; **RAVEL:** *La Valse*; respectively *L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande* and *L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris*, both conducted by Ernest Ansermet. London LP LL-956, \$5.95.

▲FEW items in the orchestral repertory have been so often and so well recorded as the hyphenated masterpiece that takes up a side and a half of this disc. The prospective buyer's choice will turn on his personal preference as to label, conductor, and coupling. This version measures up in every way to the fine Kubelik-Chicago performance on Mercury, which occupied two sides, and to the stunning one by Ormandy and his Philadelphians, which was paired by Columbia with Stravinsky's *Firebird*. Ansermet is surprisingly deliberate with certain of the *tableaux* that are ordinarily taken rather fast, and for him the *Great Gate at Kiev* swings open very slowly indeed, but with enormous accumulative effect. The recorded sound is quite something. Such hyperboles are not in order for the Ravel, with due acknowledgement of Ansermet's special affinity for this music. The Parisians are not noted for their ensemble perfection, and they have not outdone themselves here as they sometimes do. Until the Cantelli interpretation finds its way to microgroove I am inclined to favor Munch in this work; his performance with the Bostonians is a marvel in every respect. All the same the present one is not to be written off, especially if one happens to have neither of the two pieces and wants to have both of them. —J.L.

SCHUBERT: *Symphonies No. 4 in C Minor (Tragic)* and *No. 5 in B Flat*; the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. Decca LP DL-9725.

MENDELSSOHN: *Symphony No. 5 in D, Op. 107 (Reformation)*; **BEETHOVEN:** *Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93*; same artists and label. DL-9726.

SHOWPIECES FOR ORCHESTRA: *Polovetsian Dances* from *Prince Igor* (Borodin), *Caucasian Sketches, Op. 10* (Ippolitov-Ivanov), and *Rumanian Rhapsody No. 1, Op. 11* (Enesco); same artists and label. DL-9727. \$5.85 each.

▲NOT yet, regrettably, has domestic Decca met the sonic standards of its

competitors. More fairly put, the sound *per se* is acceptable but the surface noise on my review copies is oppressive. (A colleague tells me that his were quiet.) Musically, in any event, the three discs are unexciting at best and pretty *routinier* otherwise. Friscay, on the same label, has given us a more vivid evocation of Borodin's barbaric gamboling. Mitropoulos really likes the *Caucasian Sketches*, and his easily outdistances this one. Nobody has approached Stokowski in the Enesco. The *Tragic*, perhaps the most impressive performance of this lot, does not seriously challenge Van Beinum's distinguished conception. Wallenstein takes the exquisite *Fifth* rather too brusquely for my taste. The *Reformation* has plenty of seams and he lets all of them show, but then they do somewhat even at Toscanini's hands as we may confirm shortly when Victor releases his NBC broadcast version of last season. Beecham has done the *Eighth* once and for all by common assent. —J.L.

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TCHAIKOVSKY: *The Nutcracker, Op. 71*; Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. Mercury LP set (2 discs) OL-2-101, \$13.90.

▲THIS FIRST recording of the complete *Nutcracker* is timely. During the past spring season, the New York City Ballet mounted the first full-length *Nutcracker* ever witnessed in this country. With new choreography by George Balanchine, it was a sensation. This production, making the full score available, demonstrated anew Tchaikovsky's masterful talents of invention and his enormous theatrical skill. The *Nutcracker* is all about children and, many say, only for children. In any event, no other composer working in the theatre has ever, in this writer's opinion, so completely evoked with his music the magic of the child's special world of reality and fantasy. Nothing could demonstrate this better than that enchanting moment when the King of the Mice has been defeated and Clara and her *Nutcracker* (now transformed into a very young prince) leave the house and start through the snow toward that wondrous kingdom of the

Sugar Plum Fairy where you can have most anything you want to eat and drink. This section of the *Nutcracker* will be new to those who know only the concert suite. There will be other moments for these lucky listeners that will seem just as fresh and radiant and warmly spirited.

Mercury has given able engineering support to Dorati and his men. The musicians have given their very best. This album is a cause for rejoicing. —C.J.L.

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TCHAIKOVSKY: *Swan Lake*; Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Robert Irving. RCA Victor Bluebird LP disc: LBC-1064, \$2.98.

▲THIS clear and resonant recording of an unusually effective performance of about half of the full-length *Swan Lake* represents solid value. Irving has never before in my experience seemed so commanding as he emerges here. Ordinarily one does not associate delicate precision and warmth of spirit with his work. So compelling is the result that this disc must be considered the very best collection of *Swan Lake* excerpts now available. —C.J.L.

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WAGNER: *Tannhaeuser—Overture and Venusberg Music; Tristan and Isolde—Prelude and Love Death*; Paul Kletzki conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra. Angel LP 35059, \$5.95.

▲THERE is a clear, clean tonal quality to the reproduction of the Philharmonia Orchestra which is realistically reproduced in this disc. These performances of two cherished Wagnerian excerpts reveal the fine musicality of a versatile conductor, whose acquaintance I first made in his fine performance of Tchaikovsky's *Fifth Symphony* some years ago. Fine articulation, tonal beauty and rhythmic fluency distinguish his performances of the *Tannhaeuser* and *Tristan* music. He does not indulge in excesses, which is to his credit. The richer sonority of the Knappertsbush-Vienna Philharmonic version of the *Tannhaeuser* is not matched here, nor is the sensuous beauty of the Stokowski version of the *Venusberg*

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Music. I do not think that Kletzki quite captures the full rapture in the *Liebestod* though his sensitive musicianship, which avoids over-sentiment, is laudable. Steinberg's recent performance of the *Tristan* music imparts more of the ecstasy which the singer usually brings, and Stokowski in his version makes death a more rapturous experience. Those who like their Wagner played with less emotional stress will do well to investigate this excellently recorded disc with its evidence of musical care and veracity. —P.H.R.

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WAGNER: *Tannhaeuser—Overture and Venusberg Music; Lohengrin—Prelude to Act III; The Valkyrie—Ride of the Valkyries and Magic Fire Spell; The Mastersingers—Prelude to Act III, Dance of the Apprentices, Procession of the Mastersingers;* Eugene Ormandy conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra. Columbia LP ML-4865, \$5.95.

▲**FOR** sheer beauty of sound and tonal luminosity, the Philadelphia Orchestra remains unmatched. Yet on records, it lacks that transparency of sound which so many other orchestras have. There is a thickness to its lower voices—a velvety quality that hangs heavy sometimes like massive drapes. I think that Mr. Ormandy is primarily interested in beautiful orchestral sounds, and these he evokes in every selection on this disc. He also likes to linger here and there, artfully stealing time, in phrases which he apparently thinks should be more expressive. His *Tannhaeuser* music seems delayed in comparison to Kletzki's, despite its beautiful coloration. His *Valkyries' Ride* is efficient, massive in sound; his *Magic Fire Music* is beautifully played but without any personal convictions for the thematic material. In the music from *Die Meistersinger*, it is the wonderful sound of the orchestra which holds the listener, but Ormandy does not remind us of the music's relation to the visualized music drama as some conductors do who know their Wagner from theatre experience. It is all very wonderful as sound, and the recording is richly sonorous. —P.H.R.

June, 1954

BRAHMS: *Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 15;* Wilhelm Backhaus (piano) and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Boehm. London LP LL-911, \$5.95. **THE SAME:** Rudolf Serkin (piano) and the Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. Columbia LP ML-4829, \$5.95.

▲**BELIEVE** me when I say that this review was born of more comparative listening than it was worth. Score in hand, I went over these performances and their closest and most recent competitor (the London disc with Curzon as soloist) until the thrice-familiar terrain began to blur before my eyes. The verdict is in favor of Serkin and Szell, but only by a slight margin and principally for its more lifelike reproduction. At that, my copy of the Columbia was beset with a persistent crackle, but the sound of the Clevelanders is more realistic than either the Vienna or the Amsterdam orchestra (the Concertgebouw under Van Beinum backed up Curzon). Serkin's playing is, in its way, quite as persuasive as that of the others, allowing for his characteristically wider spread between lyricism and freneticism. Curzon's is the most straightforward, that of Backhaus probably the most Brahmsian in its amiable but not always precise fashion. If one owns and likes the one or the other London version I do not recommend supplanting it with Serkin's because there is simply not that much difference in quality and the attributes of each are considerable. Incidentally, by what right does program annotator Charles Burr describe the Szell of this recording as a "driving" conductor? The truth of the matter is that Szell has never, in my experience, turned in a more warm or a more singing performance of any music.

—J.L.

MOZART: *Clarinet Concerto in A, K. 622*; **R. STRAUSS:** *Horn Concerto in E Flat, Op. 11*; Ewald Koch (clarinet) with the Chamber Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Herbert Haarth and Heinz Lohan (horn) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Gerhard Wiesenhetter. Urania LP 7108, \$5.95.

▲THE competitive Brain version of the Strauss is coupled with the same composer's *Oboe Concerto*, with Goossens as soloist. The Mozart is available by Kell on a 10-inch Decca or Cahuzac on a Haydn Society disc; the latter is coupled with the otherwise unrecorded *Symphony No. 61*. With due regard for Brain and Kell, although the latter has always left me cold for all of his virtuosity, the present Urania recording seems to me to be the most sensible choice of the bunch if you want both of the works it contains. The performances are first class and the soloists exemplary. And the New Orthophonic curve is ideal for these radio tapes. In time, unquestionably, there will be an orchestrally more effective version of the Mozart, which tends to be on the pedestrian side here. It is certainly acceptable, however, and Koch himself is so good that the prospects for a better solo job are slim indeed.

—J.L.

MOZART: *Concerto For Flute and Harp in C, K.299*; *Concerto No. 1 in G for Flute, K.313*; Willy Glass (Flute), Rose Stein (Harp) and the South German Chamber Orchestra conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. Telefunken LP disc LGX 66019, \$5.95.

MOZART: *Concerto for Flute and Harp in C, K.299*; *Adagio and Rondo in E flat for Glass Harmonica, Flute, Oboe, Viola and Cello, K.617*; *Andante for Flute and Orchestra, K.315*; Camillo Wanausek (Flute), Hubert Jellinek (Harp) and other soloists with the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, Vienna. Vox LP disc PL 8550, \$5.95.

▲THE TWO versions of the *Flute and Harp Concerto* are very similar in conception and execution.

Wanausek has the more individual solo tone; I prefer the Glass-Jellinek reading, however, which is better accompanied, better integrated and has the advantage of clearer recording. However, choice of disc-mates will probably influence prospective buyers. Willy Glass is the sixth flautist to play the *G major Concerto* on LP, the fourth in the last 9 months. His version would rank along with Wanausek's (on Vox 8130) at the top of the list.

On the basis of over-all interest the Vox record catches my fancy because of its inclusion of music for an obsolete instrument, the "Glass Harmonica," the first American invention of importance in the field of music. Basically it consisted of a set of tuned glasses played by a keyboard. In this recording the part is played on a celesta, which would approximate the sound of the original. A charming little piece, but one that would wear thin very quickly, I would imagine.

Finally, a word of praise for the scholarly and entertaining notes on the Vox cover by R. D. Darrell. —A.W.P.

MOZART: *Concerto No. 23 in A, K. 488*; *Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491*; Clifford Curzon (piano) and the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. London LL-918, \$5.95.

MOZART: *Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K. 466*; *Concerto No. 23 in A, K. 488*; Marcelle Meyer with the Hewitt Orchestra. Haydn Society LP 88, \$5.95.

▲CURZON'S performance of the *A major Concerto* has more attributes than Marcelle Meyer's, despite the fact that he is sometimes a lost entity in the imbalance of the reproduction. The placement of the piano, seemingly within the orchestra, is quite in keeping with Mozart's wishes, if we accept Beecham's word for this. Sir Thomas once informed me that this validates Mozart's chamber-scaled concept in the performance of the piano concertos. Perhaps with a smaller orchestra this would be more effective. There is much, however, to admire in Curzon's performance of both concertos—the color in sound both in the *A major* and the *C minor* and

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GRAND PRIX DU DISQUE

Each year the International Committee of the Grand Prix du Disque-Académie Charles Gros presents awards to those records which have been issued in France that enrich the repertoire of recorded music. These awards are conferred on the basis of artistic and technical achievements. Once again FFRR has garnered for itself the major laurels of a world-recognized institution.

IN 1949

Concerto for Orchestra (Bela Bartok) LL-5

IN 1950

Scheherazade (Rimsky-Korsakow) LL-6

IN 1951

A Berlioz Program LL-3
 Petrouchka (Strawinsky) LL-130
 Brandenburg Concerti (Bach) LL-144
 Gerard Souzay Classic Airs LL-194
 Amarilli (in collection)
 Suzanne Danco LS-698

IN 1952

Brandenburg Concerti (Bach) LL-222
 Brandenburg Concerti (Bach) LS-226
 Four Serious Songs (Brahms) LL-271
 Symphony of Psalms (Strawinsky) LL-889

Mother Goose—Complete (Ravel) LL-388
 Petite Symphonie Concertante (Martin) LL-390
 La Bohème—Complete (Puccini) LL-462/3

IN 1953

Three Corners Hat—Complete (Falla) LL-598
 Good Humored Ladies—Ballet (Scarlatti) LL-624

AND NOW IN 1954

Daphnis and Chloé—Complete (Ravel) LL-693
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the beauty in sound of the orchestral playing. In the *Larghetto* of the *C minor*, there is both poetic poise and expressiveness. Refinement and grandeur distinguish the work of pianist and conductor in the first two movements. The slower pace adopted in the final *Allegretto* makes this movement less persuasive than in the Schnabel-Süsskind version, where the observance of a moderately fast tempo does not exclude the liveliness assuredly indicated in this music. For my part, I find Curzon's *A major* worthy of consideration since no existent performance to date is completely satisfying. However, the Schnabel *C minor*, barring its irritating cadenzas, is more compelling than this one.

Marcelle Meyer is an accomplished pianist, but her objectivity in both the *A major* and the *D minor* leaves much to be desired. There is a healthy vitality in her playing but little elegance. In the *A major*, as well as the *D minor*, the orchestral playing tends to roughness and does not compare with the work of Krips and Süsskind. The recording is less impressive soundwise than the London, its clarity being an asset but at the expense of variety in mood. Consistent crackle was disturbing in both concertos. The best of the *D minors* so far, in my estimation, is the Schnabel performance. —P.H.R.

MOZART: *Concerto No. 12 in A, K. 414*; *Concerto No. 18 in B flat, K. 456*; Lili Kraus (piano) with Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux RCA Victor LP disc LM-1783, \$5.95.

▲**ASIDE** from an occasional wiriness in upper partials, this recording is stunning in its sonic warmth and its impression of quiet spaciousness. Lili Kraus is not quite the performer she was before the war, but she is still good enough to make lovers of these two admirable concertos very happy. Her work is a bit hectic here and there, and her fingerwork is not absolutely precise; but she has a sparkling tone, a lively sense of rhythm, and unanimity with Monteux and the Bostonians that is ever so appealing.

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This attractive disc has no serious competitors. —C.J.L.

VIVALDI: *La Stravaganza, Op. 4*; Reinhold Barchet (violin) and Helma Elsner (harpsichord) with the Pro Musica String Orchestra conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. Vox LP set DL-103, boxed, \$19.95.

▲**TAKING** a cue from RCA Victor's "limited editions," Vox has made a real production of this three-disc set. The outsized album is bound in leatherette, with lettering in gold leaf or some reasonable facsimile, and boxed in the bargain. I am not sure it is in fact a bargain, since the customer must pay something over two dollars for the fancy packaging, but I suspect that a great many will go along happily with the premium price because the item does make a striking appearance. Musically, the proposition is somewhat more problematical. Vivaldians will of course want to have the first performance of the twelve concerti entitled, for no good reason other than box office appeal, *La Stravaganza*. If they are true Vivaldians they already own *L'Estro Armonico* by the same artists and they will know what to expect, which is to say that the playing herewith is on the stodgy side and not as compelling as it might have been in Italian hands. A cool Central European approach to this essentially Latin master is by all means better than no approach at all, however, and we must credit the present principals for their enterprise. I give way to no one in my admiration for the best of Vivaldi but I must confess, in all objectivity, that I was less impressed by *La Stravaganza* than I have been by most of his other major works. It never seems to catch fire and burn. Joseph Braunstein, in his extended and excellent annotations, does not demean himself to venture an appraisal of the music in comparison with its better known companions, but one may hazard a guess that the general listener will be less taken by this recording than will the Baroque-happy musicologists. Those who know the *Quattro Stagioni* will be fascinated

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to hear hints of it in the first, fourth and twelfth of this series. —J.L.

Chamber Music

BACH: *Unaccompanied Cello Suites Nos. 1 in G and 4 in E Flat*; Janos Starker (cello). Period LP SPL-582, \$5.95.

▲IF there is a finer cellist than Janos Starker on the musical scene he has not come my way. For the highly specialized repertory of unaccompanied Bach, perhaps the more classical predisposition of Janigro is to be preferred. This is admittedly a subjective matter. As to executive skill there is no fault to be found with either artist. Both of them play all the notes as they were meant to be played, with an allowable tolerance for human limitations, and both are treated handsomely by their engineers. Those who are holding out for Casals, incidentally, may or may not have their fond hopes fulfilled. Thus far only the second and third of his old Victor series are available, and his recent collaboration with Columbia does not augur favorably for more shellac transfers. —J.L.

BOTTESINI: *Grand Duo Concertante for Violin and Double Bass with Piano Accompaniment*; **DRAGONETTI:** *Concerto for Double Bass with Piano Accompaniment*; Mario Anastasio (Bass), J. Tryon (Violin), and H. Wingreen (Piano). Classic LP disc 1035, \$5.95.

▲I AM sure that every bass player with the price in his pocket (this requirement may cut down potential sales considerably) will rush out to buy this record. Anastasio's courageous handling of the considerable technical requirements of these works will no doubt provide fuel for many a midnight coffee session.

To us innocent bystanders, however, the appeal of this release is purely one of curiosity, for the irritation quotient of a solo string bass lies, in my estimation, somewhere between that of a snoring bed partner and an outboard motor.

—A.W.P.

A NATHAN MILSTEIN RECITAL:

Sonata No. 12 (Pergolesi), *Intermezzo* (Schumann), *Allegro* (Brahms), *Burleska* (Suk), *Paganiniana* (Milstein) and *Nigun* (Bloch); Nathan Milstein (violin) and Carlo Bussotti (piano). Capitol LP P-8259, \$5.72.

▲SOLID musical value in this disc. The *Intermezzo* and *Allegro* are movements from a freak sonata that Schumann and Brahms wrote in collaboration with Albert Dietrich, a pupil of the older man, in 1853. Schumann also wrote the *Finale*. Other critics have insisted for years that the work is absolutely first class; at least these two movements are nothing less. Too bad we couldn't have had the whole thing. But we only get one of the *Baal Shem* episodes so I suppose beggars can't be choosers. The Pergolesi is a grandly violinistic period piece. The Suk trifle makes a wonderful showcase. Milstein is in magnificent form for the whole show, as you would expect. His accompaniment is adequate. The sound is excellent. —J.L.

MOZART: *Serenade No. 10 in B flat for 13 Wind Instruments, K. 361*; Wind Ensemble of the RIAS Orchestra, Berlin. Telefunken LP disc LGX 66006, \$5.95.

BEETHOVEN: *Wind Trio in C, Op. 87*; *Variations on Mozart's "Reich mir die Hand mein Leben"*; H. Kamesch (Oboe), M. Kautsky (Oboe), and H. Hadamovsky (English Horn); **BEE-THOVEN:** *Rondino in E flat*; Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group. Westminster LP disc WL 5262, \$5.95.

▲IN this day and age no one needs to be told that Mozart's *K. 361* is one of the masterpieces of that genius' large and varied output. Suffice to say that this present Telefunken recording outlines its virtues in a truly suitable manner. These Berlin players favor a more brilliant tone and more precision of execution than the veiled, old-world character of the easy-going Viennese, their closest competitors. American ensembles have recorded this score, too. Excellent instrumentalists

were involved, but the American playing lacks the homogeneity of tone and spirit that characterizes a definitive performance.

The other disc is what some of my more demonstrative colleagues like to call "a gem." None of these pieces can be termed immortal; I must confess that the *Trio* is somewhat long-winded and tiresome. The *Variations*, however, which some of you will recall from the excellent old Musicraft album of the thirties, has worn extremely well over the years. Expert craftsmanship is here coupled with a bluff charm sparkling with vitality. The playing throughout is of the highest order; this performance of the *Rondino* makes Scherman's competitive effort (EMS 1) sound just a bit amateurish.

—A.W.P.

Keyboard

BARTOK: *For Children, Vol. I and Vol. II; Bagatelles, Op. 6 and Roumanian Folk Dances and Christmas Carols*; Tibor Kozma (piano). Bartok LPs 919 and 920 (*For Children*) and 918, \$5.95 each.

▲THERE is no more gifted recording engineer in the business than Peter Bartók, son of the late composer. It goes without saying, then, that these discs are sonically superb. Kozma is perhaps best known to the American public as a conductor, but his pianistic talents are superior to say the least and no one plays the Bartók keyboard repertory any better on the whole. The Pressler version of *For Children* was not lacking in excellences, but the reproductive quality left much to be desired. That defection is remedied herewith. The lesser works (including a *Bagatelle* that seems to have inspired the popular tune *I Can't Get Started*) are turned out handsomely.

—J.L.

BEETHOVEN: *Bagatelles (1797), Op. 33 Op. 119, Op. 126*; Grant Johannesen

(piano). Concert Hall LP disc CHS-1199, \$5.95.

▲THIS comprehensive survey of Beethoven's bagatelles can be warmly endorsed. The recording is a bit close; but the sound is vibrant and clear, and emphatically piano. The surfaces are wonderously quiet. Much care and thought has gone into Johannesen's very good performances. This fine young artist clearly realizes how much Beethoven thought of his bagatelles, how much energy and love he lavished upon them. I would like to call attention to the lovely No. 7 in the *Op. 33* set, the No. 8 with its strange trills and No. 9 with its weird swinging rhythm in the *Op. 119* group. If any listener is not familiar with *Op. 126*, I urge him to obtain this record. These are the greatest numbers and each a masterful miniature conceived in the style of the last quartets. The alternation of a savage rhythmic section with an episode of fantastic enchantment in No. 4 makes this piece one of Beethoven's most imaginative works, small though it is. —C.J.L.

BRAHMS: *Capriccio in B Minor, Op. 76, No. 2; Rhapsodies in B Minor and in G Minor, Op. 79, Nos. 1 and 2; Intermezzi in B Flat Minor and C Sharp Minor, Op. 117, Nos. 2 and 3; Intermezzi in A and E Flat Minor, Op. 118, Nos. 2 and 6; Intermezzi in E Minor and C and Rhapsody in E Flat, Op. 119, Nos. 2, 3 and 4*; Artur Rubinstein (piano). RCA Victor LP LM-1787, \$5.72.

▲FOR this listener there is no pianist who plays Brahms quite as wonderfully as Rubinstein does. It is a pity, really, that this artist did not choose to essay the entire literature, as Gieseking did with mixed results on a pair of Angel discs earlier this year. Perhaps there will be a sequel to the present collection; one earnestly hopes so. The combination of Rubinstein, Brahms and New Orthophonic is just unbeatable. One could cavil with a phrase here and there but the pervading insight is grounds only for gratitude. One could take issue, however, with the panegyric on Rubinstein

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that supplants the program annotations. Not that there is any disagreement over the artist's primacy in this repertory, but the white space on the record jacket is not the place to rave about it. The hero of the occasion is, after all, Brahms himself, and some pertinent remarks about the composer and the music would have done more honor to the pianist than does the excessive vice versa with which we are confronted. The disc is entitled, by the way, *Rubinstein Plays Brahms*. At least the two names are given in the same type size. —J.L.

■
DEBUSSY: *15 Piano Pieces*; Angel LP disc 35026, \$5.95. *Preludes (Book I)*; Angel LP disc 35066, \$5.95. Walter Gieseking (piano).

▲**TECHNICALLY** speaking, the phonograph has finally caught up with Walter Gieseking. These are the first recordings that really give a vivid impression of what Gieseking sounds like when he is playing in a concert hall. This is cause for rejoicing. For the unique color, skill, love and discipline this great pianist brings to most anything he plays—and particularly Debussy—are among our century's priceless riches and demand no less than authentic preservation. The disc of miscellaneous piano pieces (many of them often dubbed minor Debussy) is perhaps the more ingratiating of the two in question. Under Gieseking's hands, all these works glow with the pure flame of beauty—every one of them—*Danse, Reverie, 1st and 2nd Arabesques, Nocturne, Valse Romantique, L'Isle Joyeuse, Le Petit Negre, Masques, Danse Bohemienne, Ballade, Mazurka, La plus que lent, Berceuse Heroique, Hommage à Haydn*.

This is Gieseking's third recorded performance of the magical and evocative *Preludes (Book I)*. It seems no better or no poorer than the wonderful versions previously offered. Its sound, of course, is superior and this element allows us to hear things we never heard before. The intoxicating *Sons et les Parfums Tourment dans l'Air du Soir* seems more sensuous, the crystalline delight of *Les* June, 1954

Collines d'Anacapri seems more tonic and bracing, *La Serenade Interrompue* has more bite and a new flashing irony. And perhaps, most impressive of all, the roll and swell of the mysterious and grand *Cathedrale Engloutie*.

These discs should not be missed under any circumstances. —C.J.L.

■
GRIEG: *Ballade, Op. 24*; **KABALEVSKY:** *Prelude in B minor, Op. 38, No. 6*; **RACHMANINOFF:** *Prelude in G minor, Op. 32, No. 5*; **CHOPIN:** *Prelude in F sharp minor, Op. 28, No. 8*; **MESSIAEN:** *Preludes—Plainte calme, No. 7 Un reflet dans le vent, No. 8*; Stell Anderson (piano). Oceanic LP 38, \$5.95.

▲**SOME** years ago, Miss Andersen recorded the Grieg *Ballade*, a work with which she seems to have identified herself. One of Grieg's finest piano compositions, in which there is more depth of feeling than we usually associate with this composer, the *Ballade* is in the form of variations based on a Norwegian melody. Miss Andersen plays it tastefully, savoring its changing moods with poetic understanding and feeling. Hers is an artistry that is cultivated, eminently musical but in no way sensational. She can conjure up a lovely delicacy when required, as in the Grieg, the Rachmaninoff and the Chopin. The second half of her program, featuring five *Preludes*, is played with discretion and a certain responsiveness, but the moods of these pieces lack needed contrast. Delicacy and restraint, both attributes of the pianist, are nicely exploited, but the Chopin was ill-chosen to follow the Rachmaninoff and the meandering poetic sensitivity of Messiaen leaves the listener in a mood of unfinished business. The recording is good, though the piano tone tends to be a bit brittle and lacking in depth, which is true of so many pianos these days heard in concert halls.

—P.H.R.

■
MENDELSSOHN *Songs Without Words* (Vol. 2 and 3); Ginette Doyen (piano).

Westminster LP discs WL-5246 and 5279, \$5.95. each.

▲THE FIRST volume of these imaginative and melodious pieces was played with skill and love by Miss Doyen and recorded with attractive naturalness by Westminster. One of the really enjoyable things in the LP catalog, it now has two companions which will provide us with additional delight. So personal and spontaneous are these lovely works that one would take them even in performances less revealing and affectionate than are happily provided here. The *Songs Without Words* seem to me the best of Mendelssohn's keyboard compositions (yes, even better than his *Variations Serieuses*). It is good to have all of them for the first time, on LP. For those who cannot afford the luxury of three volumes, I suggest Vol. 2.

—C.J.L.

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SCHUBERT: *Fantasy Sonata in G Op. 78; 3 Klavierstuecke, Op. Posth.;* Henry Jolles (piano). Haydn Society LP disc HSL-81, \$5.95.

▲NATURAL piano sound of unusual distinctness and resonance lends this attractive disc an appeal over and above its substantial intellectual and expressive merits. This is the first really splendid recording of Schubert's grand and touching *Fantasy Sonata* and the first LP version of the beautiful *Klavierstuecke in E flat minor* and *E flat* (the last one in *C major* is less compelling). The first two movements of the sonata are among Schubert's most heavenly work. Intensely dramatic, they continually alternate outspoken passages redolent of passionate personal fervor with those of a lyrical quality so intimate, so gracious, so touching they would melt a heart of stone. The entire work needs tremendous personal projection and a huge variety of expressive hues, as well as an understanding of its unique architecture, if it is to make its points. Henry Jolles has all these things, and his performance is one of the most beautiful things on records. His only fault (if it can be considered a fault at all; it also part of the player's strength

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if one thinks of it in relation to wisdom) is age. Jolles is clearly an old man whose fingers will do what the mind asks at all times. Rapid passages are slowed up here and there or are blurred a bit. One cheerfully puts up with this for the beauties heard and the emotions communicated.

—C.J.L.

●
SCHUMANN: *Etudes Symphoniques, Op. 13; FRANCK:* *Prelude, Chorale and Fugue;* Julius Katchen (piano). London LP disc LL-823, \$5.95.

▲KATCHEN brings so much skill, respect, and good intentions to his playing of these two popular works that this listener wishes he could get more enthusiastic about this excellently recorded disc. There is, alas, a lack of personal identification on the soloist's part with the music at hand. If there is one thing any Schumann piano piece requires it is projection of both the music's expression and the performer's love and understanding of it. Moreover, this projection must seem spontaneous or it negates the whole spirit of romanticism. This point of view is not entirely appropriate for the Franck *Prelude, Chorale and Fugue*, for this work is more about its form than its expression. Perhaps this is why Katchen seems a bit more effective here, even though he offers at no point any special revelation.

—C.J.L.

●
SCHUMANN: *Sonata in G minor, Op. 22; Humoreske, Op. 20;* Joerg Demus (piano). Westminster LP disc WL-5264, \$5.95.

▲A WARM-SOUNDING recording of efficient but somewhat unimaginative renderings of Schumann's impassioned *G minor Sonata* and his ineffective *Humoreske*. Demus, however, shows respect for the composer's directions; and with Schumann, these days, that's something. For the sonata, the preference here is for Johannesen's version for Concert Hall. As for *Humoreske*, this work continues to seem like an interminable march of short sections afflicted with a monotony of tonality seldom ranging beyond B flat

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and G minor. Demus' performance is the first on LP.

—C.J.L.

VIERNE: *Carillon de Westminster, Legende, Scherzetto, Divertissement*; **REGER:** *Five Choral Preludes and Pastorale*; **LISZT:** *Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H*; Robert Noehren (organ). Audiophile LP disc AP-2, \$5.95.

▲ALL of the music listed above, with the exception of the Liszt, is new to LP. The Vierne and Reger pieces, though simple and direct, are somewhat dry in expression and uninteresting as to invention. They point up once again (as other LPs containing organ music new to the phonograph have recently done) the skimpy quality of the organ literature of the last 75 years. Robert Noehren, playing on the acceptable organ of Grace Episcopal Church in Sandusky, Ohio, performs his duties with easy dispatch. The grand Liszt prelude and fugue is, however, better served by Columbia's spectacular recording of E. Power Biggs' excellent performance.

—C.J.L.

VILLA-LOBOS: *Rude Poeme, The "Three Marias", Children's Doll Suite*; Jacques Abram (piano). EMS LP disc No. 10, \$5.95.

▲BECAUSE there have been so few piano works by the modern Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos in the LP catalog, this new disc is welcome in spite of its shortcomings. Getting complaints out of the way first, one must report that the clear recording lacks spaciousness and sufficient room resonance. This quality of sound hurts most of all the big, long, rhapsodic *Rude Poeme* which was composed for Artur Rubinstein and his power of projection in a large hall. And though Jacques Abram has much technical skill and a lively sense of rhythm, he cannot make this music seem interesting all the time. His playing needs more personal temperament and a grander variety of expressive and tonal hues. Abram is more capable in his handling of Villa-Lobos' moderately charming, children-inspired pieces. These

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are the most enjoyable works on this disc in that they are characteristic of the composer's personal idiom and have, in addition, some shape and a sense of direction.

—C.J.L.

WIDOR: *Symphony No. 9*; Clarence Watters (organ); *Symphony No. 10*; William Self (organ). Classic Editions LP set CE-1012, 2 discs, \$11.90.

▲AT one time or another, every organist seems obliged to tackle one or several of Widor's big organ symphonies. The reason for this is that these works, empty of vibrant expression though they are, sound grand and are conceived for most of the organs in use today. They are also, alas, about the best works written for the organ during the 30 years after Franck's most productive period. Another reason they get played is that Widor was himself a performer and teacher of great distinction and no little influence.

The recordings of the *Symphony No. 9*—the *Gothique* (played on the Trinity College Chapel Organ, Hartford, Conn.) and the *No. 10*—the *Romane* (performed on the organ of All Saints Church, Worcester, Mass.) are clean and warm of sound wide in range. The two organists do their duties well enough without imparting any special conviction or the electric excitement with which Marcel Dupré, for one, used to illuminate this music.

—C.J.L.

AN ANTHOLOGY OF JEWISH SONG:

Sylvia Schultz, accompanying herself on the guitar, with Milia Eram (piano), Lane Daven (recorder) and Kurt Hellman (percussion). Classic Editions LP 1036, \$5.95.

▲CHOICE selection of Hebrew and Yiddish folk favorites, throatily but effectively sung by a classically trained artist who has made this popular repository her special province. The tailor's

song (*Mit a Nodl, On a Nodl*) and the plaintive *Potatoes (Bulbes)* are typical of the twenty characteristic favorites included in the collection. The various accompaniments are in each case appropriate and effective, and the close-up sound does ample justice to the soloist. As these novelty discs go, quite a good deal all around. —J.L.

BACH: *Easter Oratorio*; Laurence Dutoit (soprano), Maria Nussbaumer (contralto), Franz Gruber (tenor), Otto Wiener (basso), Akademie Kammerchor and Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Ferdinand Grossmann. Vox PL 8620, \$5.95.

▲THE second recording of the *Easter Oratorio* is in all essentials an improvement on its predecessor. Whereas the Prohaska performance (Bach Guild 507) gives the impression of being more spirited, it is also quite apparently less carefully rehearsed. If Prohaska almost invariably takes brisker tempi, the result is a loss in clarity, once or twice an out and out scramble. And whereas the Bach Guild reproduction is more powerful, Vox's is equally live and clean. The soloists, as a group, show better in the new version. Chief among them is the tenor, for he has the very beautiful aria, *Sanfte soll mein Todeskummer*, to sing, with its undulating accompaniment including two recorders. Equiluz, in the older recording, is not quite satisfactory; Gruber is definitely better. Dutoit, too, makes more of her big aria than does Mme. Weis-Osborn. Between the two contraltos there is not so much to choose, for Prohaska has the admirable Hilde Rössl-Majdan; at the least, Miss Nussbaumer is not far behind her. —P.L.M.

BACH: *St Matthew Passion*; Lois Marshall (soprano), Mary Morrison (soprano), Margaret Stilwell (contralto), Edward Johnson (tenor), James Milligan (baritone), James Lamond (tenor), Donald Brown (baritone), Eric Tredwell (baritone), Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and Toronto Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir

Ernest MacMillan, Victor-Bluebird LBC 6101, 3 discs, \$8.94.

▲THIS is not a *St. Matthew Passion* to compete with others listed in the catalogues, for it is a different kind of performance from any of those recently available. To begin with, it is sung in English; then, it is somewhat cut down in length. Its intention is to reach its hearers directly, and musicological considerations have not been paramount. It should be added quickly that the performance has been prepared reverently and few apologies are needed. Victor has done a real service in making the recording available and at a price that should make it doubly attractive. When this same group of musicians came to New York to present Bach's masterpiece one of the papers announced that Edward Johnson, retired General Manager of the Metropolitan Opera would return as a singer for the first time in many years. The next day the story was corrected: by coincidence the Evangelist is sung by another Canadian tenor by the same name. As so much of the drama depends upon him, it is good to report that he pronounces his recitatives clearly and with impressive conviction. Both he and Milligan, who sings the words of Jesus, do much to maintain the intensity of the performance. For sheer vocal beauty and musical good taste, Miss Marshall is outstanding among the solo group. Miss Stilwell reveals good vocal material, but her diction is rather clouded. The excellent work of chorus and orchestra has been clearly reproduced. —P.L.M.

BRITTEN: *A Ceremony of Carols*; Copenhagen Boys with Enid Simon (harp); Mogens Woldike (choirmaster) and Benjamin Britten (conductor). London LD 9102, ten-inch \$2.95.

▲THIS fourth LP performance of Britten's delightful work is in many ways the best. The Danish boys never cease to astonish by their mastery of the English language (in this case archaic English) or by the fine sensitivity of their singing. In style and conception the performance

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lies somewhere between the smooth and polished singing of the Shaw group (Victor LM 1088) and the rougher, more elemental exposition of the Morriston Boys Choir (London LPS 57). If there is nothing here quite like the exultant *Deo gratias* of the other group of boys, there is some particularly melting solo singing in *That yonge child*, and a beautiful realization of *As dew in Aprile*—probably the loveliest part of the work. There are, of course, those who do not like boys' voices, and for them the Shaw recording is recommended. For myself, I would settle for this new version.

—P.L.M.

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DVORAK: *Gypsy Songs*, Op. 55; *Love Songs*, Op. 83 (nos. 1, 2, 3, 6); **GRIEG:** *Solvejg's Song*; *On St. John's Eve*; *Tides of Spring*; *I Love Thee*; *A Dream*; *Thanks for the Advice*; *A Swan*; *Eros*; Dorothy Warenskjold (soprano) with the Concerts Art Orchestra conducted by George Greeley. Capitol LP P-8247, \$5.70.

▲THE CHIEF interest here attaches to the singer, Dorothy Warenskjold, who has sung with both the San Francisco and the City Center opera companies, and is the possessor of an appealing lyric soprano. Without taking a careful look at the jacket, however, the listener may have a difficult time discovering what language Miss Warenskjold is singing in, if, indeed, it is any language at all. One is apt to be a little jolted on hearing a word or two of our own vernacular 'midst the stilted platform diction that Miss Warenskjold (probably unconsciously) affects. The misdeed has been further compounded by the anonymous translator(s) and the anonymous orchestrator(s). The accompaniments here perpetrated (no other word is possible) would put Muzak to shame. With the identical sirupy gloss spread over each song, it is difficult to distinguish one title from another. The texts of the songs are not given on the jacket, and the recording sounds somewhat confined. —R. RePass

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FAURE: *La Bonne Chanson*, Op. 61; **GOUNOD:** *Biondina*; Hugues Cuenod June, 1954

(tenor) and Franz Holetschek (piano). Westminster WL 5278, \$5.95.

▲IT IS sad to have to report that the third *Bonne chanson* to reach LP does not provide for the complete Fauréan the satisfactory answer for which he has been waiting. Cuenod is a fine artist, as we all know, but his field is earlier music. He is simply not at home in this period. His singing of the first song—and Holetschek's piano playing—is measured almost to the point of being metronomic. It would be unjust to say the artists are not sensitive, but they certainly have not penetrated this music. The one advantage the tenor has over his LP predecessors lies in the fact that the cycle seems to call quite definitely for the male voice. Danco (London LS 589) sings with her customary artistry, but somehow she fails to get below the surface. My vote would go to the young American soprano Joan Brainerd (Concert Hall CHC 49) but her record has been dropped from the catalog. Let us hope that Victor will revive the near-definitive interpretation of the Panzeras in the Treasury series. The little Gounod cycle fares better. Perhaps the very simplicity of the music was a challenge to the artists; at any rate, the twelve songs are given for the direct, old-fashioned charm that is in them.

—P.L.M.

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HANDEL: *Belshazzar*; Franz Fehringer (Belshazzar); Friederike Sailer (Nitocris); Hanne Muency (Cyrus); Helene Metz (Daniel); Robert Titze (Gobrias); A Messenger; Chorus and Orchestra of the State Conservatory of Music, conducted by Hans Grischkat. Period SPL 594, 2 discs, \$11.90. **The Same;** Werner Liebing (Belshazzar); Edith Laux (Nitocris); Armine Muller (Cyrus); Emil Friedrich (Daniel); Edward Alsen (Gobrias); Combined Berlin Chamber Chorus and Berlin Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Helmut Koch. Bach Guild BG 534-35, 2 discs, \$11.90.

▲IN the Handel renaissance things seem to come in pairs: hardly has one of the producers discovered a forgotten score before a rival follows with another version of the same thing. In the present case,

both recordings coming from Germany, we are offered two performances of an English oratorio translated into German! Both performances, too, are extensively cut, but there the resemblance ceases. I was fortunate in that I listened to the Bach Guild recording first, for I must admit I found it rather dull going. There is little evidence of enthusiasm or attention to detail on anybody's part, and the soloists are, to say the least, unimpressive. The recording is more powerful than Period's, and it has a certain brilliance, but this is as far as I can go in praising it. In the Period set one begins to notice a good deal of superior Handel in the score—such a chorus as *By slow degrees the wrath of God*, for example, or the opening solos in *Tell it out among the heathen*. The soloists are all vastly superior, with special credit to Miss Sailer, who has never sounded so good, Miss Muench, whom I do not recall hearing before, Fehringer, who sings with a real heroic quality here, though some of his passage work is a bit rough, and Titze, whose delivery is impressive. The performance has spirit, and it is satisfactorily reproduced.

—P.L.M.

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IVES: *When stars are in the quiet skies; Tolerance; A night thought; At the river; At sea; A Christmas carol; Walt Whitman; I'll not complain; In summer fields; At parting; REVUELTAS:* *Five songs of childhood; Serenade; It is true; The owl; Bull frogs.* Jacqueline Greissle (soprano) and Josef Wolman (piano). SPA 9, \$5.95.

▲A PROGRAM of Ives' songs was overdue. The present selection shows the composer in various stages, from the 1891 setting of Bulwer's *When stars are in the quiet skies* to the 1921 *Walt Whitman* and *At sea*. From the beginning the Ives style has been marked by a strange mixture of the naive and the sophisticated. One wonders, sometimes, why he ever wrote down some of the songs; sometimes one feels he is experimenting, and again the result is quite simple and beautiful. There is a note in the published volume of 114 songs explaining why he

felt justified in setting such poems as *Ich grolle night* and *Feldeinsamkeit*, which had certainly received their definitive settings before Ives was born. As the case proves, his music for these poems is conservative in the extreme, and not particularly interesting. Furthermore, his manner of setting words is sometimes peculiar. And he has elected to set the makeshift translations found in a volume of standard *lieder*. The *Christmas carol*, however, is a simple and sweetly direct song, to show the composer's other side, and *Tolerance* could be effective. *At the river* turns out to be a familiar gospel hymn with a modernistic chordal background. Unfortunately the singing in this recording is modest (which an Ives interpreter can hardly afford to be) and rather shaky. The piano playing, too, is far too reticent.

The Revueltas songs are all sung in stilted English translations, and there is little evidence of any great distinction or novelty. It is not easy to follow the English as it is sung. —P.L.M.

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SCHUBERT: *Mass in G; BACH:* *Komm, Jesu, komm; BRAHMS:* *Der Abend; Nächstens; Zum Schluss;* Robert Shaw Chorale, conducted by Robert Shaw. Victor LM 1784, \$5.72.

▲SURELY the note with which annotator Alice Parker introduces the first piece on this program must be among the briefest, yet the most conclusive ever offered: "Of all Schubert's settings of the Mass text, this in G major is the simplest and most lyric. Scored only for chorus, soloists and strings, it continually reveals the great gift of song and the joyful faith of its eighteen-year-old composer." The performance here offered is less imposing and passionate than that of Ferdinand Grossmann (Vox PL 7510). The voices of Shaw's Chorale are less vibrant than those of the *Akademiechor*, which is to the former's advantage; the work of both chorus and orchestra is neater, smoother. But the soloists Yvonne Ciannella, Walter Carringer and Raymond Keast—who have their say in the lovely *Benedictus*, sing with less assurance than the

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Viennese group. We now have three recordings of the Bach motet, and I have no hesitation in pronouncing this the best of them. Neither the performance in English under Reginald Jacques (London LS 128) nor the German one under Hugh Ross (Columbia ML 2102) overcomes the impression that this music is hard work. Shaw has wisely followed the more recent conclusions of Bach scholarship, reinforcing the singers with strings and wind instruments. His approach is simple and straightforward; for the first time one feels one is hearing the music. The three Brahms songs for chorus are warmly characteristic, especially the first. The singing and the playing of the two pianists have the proper surge and swell; the most is made of the climaxes.

—P.L.M.

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SCHUMANN: *Liederkreis, Op. 39;*

BRAHMS: *Vier ernste Gesänge, Op. 121;* William Warfield (baritone) and Otto Herz (piano). Columbia ML 4860, \$5.95.

▲**MR. WARFIELD** burst upon the musical horizon several years ago with some of the finest equipment of any singer before the public. The voice is a noble one; he is a thorough musician; he has a sense of style as well as acceptable diction in various languages. It is still possible to say these things after listening to this record, though the program adds up to a disappointment. The singer never seems to get beneath the surface of these songs. The tone quality is open and lacking in intensity, the diction more clean than convincing. The Schumann cycle, to be sure, comes better from a woman's voice, though there is nothing in the songs to disqualify a sensitive male artist. Warfield misses the drama of *Waldeggespräch*, and his voice does not envelop us as it should in *Mondnacht*. So much in lieder singing depends on the singer's ability to color the voice so suit the mood.

The Brahms cycle is more Warfield's meat, but again we miss the true intimacy and directness the songs so definitely need. Of the four the last is best. The

recording does well enough by the voice, but the piano tone is on the shallow side.

—P.L.M.

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STRAUSS: *Four Last Songs; Capriccio—Closing Scene, Op. 85;* Elisabeth Schwarzkopf with Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackerman. Angel LP 35084, \$5.95.

▲**IN APRIL**, Lisa Della Casa's recording of the four songs was reviewed (see page 272). For consistent beauty of tone, this singer can be preferred to Miss Schwarzkopf who presses her tone on occasion and sometimes is less ingratiating in her upper register (in *Fruehling*, especially). Yet, Schwarzkopf often makes more of the words with the result that her singing of the final song, *Im Abendrot*, is more moving. The songs are presented here in the published order—*Fruehling, September, Beim Schafengehen, Im Abendrot*—which surely was the way that Strauss intended them to be sung as a cycle. Except for the first, the theme of the songs is a farewell to life and an anticipation of death. In these songs, among the most moving that Strauss has left us, there is none of the incandescence of his earlier vocal writings for their intrinsic beauties are tinged with autumnal resignation. Their vocal lines recall the Strauss of the operas, though with a lyrical propriety which was not always present in the operas. The present recording is equally as fine as the London issue, and the orchestral direction of Ackermann is skillfully handled.

Strauss' *Capriccio* has been called a conversation piece. It has to do with the rival merits of poetry and music. The story is told in the excellent notes. A widowed Countess is torn between two suitors—a poet and a musician. In the Closing Scene, she is alone in her salon reflecting on the merits of the poetry of one and the music of the other. Like the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*, she gazes into a mirror and addresses her image. It is a wholly charming scene for, unlike the earlier one, it is not tinged with anguish. Miss Schwarzkopf sings it beautifully with some lovely,

melting tones. How cleverly she acts with her voice! The appearance of the Major-domo at the end, announcing dinner, is unfortunately left out, for it would have added the touch of reality. The Countess, in the best of humors as she goes into the dining hall, has reached no decision.

—P.H.R.

POPS SPOTLIGHT

PLEASANT SURPRISE of the month: MGM's glorious hodge-podge from the sound track of the I.F.E. film *The Golden Coach* (E-3111). The music is all by Vivaldi with the exception of brief snippets from Corelli and Martini. One side is purely orchestral, consisting of movements from Vivaldi concertos. The other is a so-called "montage" from the repertory of the *commedia dell'Arte* company that figures in the movie. I have not seen the picture, but I certainly wouldn't miss it now. On another disc entitled *Music for Jennifer* (Columbia CL-6281) Paul Weston recalls several movies of old that were built around Jennifer Jones: *Duel in the Sun*, *Since You Went Away*, *The Song of Bernadette* and *Love Letters*. If you liked them, or La Jones, you will like this souvenir.

TELEVISION department: On *TV Curtain Calls* (Capitol H-515) Kate Smith sings a dose of her favorites like *The Very Thought of You* and *If I Had You*. Indestructible appeal, this girl. The same could be said of Jackie Gleason, who offers a number of his apparently quite popular impersonations on another Capitol item, H-511. I have always thought that his sidekick, Art Carney, is pretty good too. One of these days, when Jackie runs out of solo repertory, he might try recording one of his routines with Carney. That should be something.

MOOD MUSIC: Decca this month presents *Heart Strings* by Florian Zaubach—"America's outstanding violin personality." (DL-5507). Sweet fiddling, but nothing outstanding. The same firm has another mood music thing, or at least I presume it should be so classified, called *Invitation to Cocktails* (DL-8056). The suave strains of Carmen Cavallaro, Tommy Dorsey and Harry Horlick are interwoven in this conversational *aperitif*, which includes such heady components as *September Song* and *Cuddle Up a Little Closer*. A similar offering is *Invitation to Dining* (DL-8057) in which Paul Whiteman, Victor Young, Meredith Wilson, Peter Yorke and Camarata combine everything from *Manhattan Serenade* to *O mio babbino caro*. Capitol has issued the fifth and sixth in its series rather frankly entitled *Background Music*. They are available separately on 10-inch discs or together on one large one, P-489. The latest additions are described respectively as "music blended to mix graciously with social gatherings" and "sweet and sentimental songs

for harmonizing." MGM has a moody number (E-3094) called *Street of Dreams*, with the silky house orchestra playing *East of the Sun* and *Ill Wind* and such with nice style. And speaking of style it would be a sizable proposition to outdo Percy Faith and Mitch Miller in their specialties, which are mingled happily on a Columbia 12-inch (CL-551) name of *Music Until Midnight*. The first band has the title song, which opens with eleven chimes—the gimmick being that there will be an hour of music to come before the witching hour. Tricks, tricks, I suppose you gotta have tricks. But Miller plays such sweet oboe and English horn that everything sounds just beguiling anyway. So does *Soft Light Music*, the Vox mood item of the month (VX-580). Dolly Morghan's electric organ comes through with rather startling fidelity.

BROADWAY stuff: Two fine Columbia 12-inches on the agenda this time. On CL-554 we have an actual performance, in fact a neat splice of three actual performances, by the inimitable Victor Borge. People seem to have diametric opinions on this guy. I think he is exceedingly funny. Surely this recorded show is. ML-4890 features a young French miss named Jeanmaire about whom there seems to be only one opinion as far as I can ascertain. This is another one of Goddard Lieberson's show albums, the show being, of course, *The Girl in the Pink Tights*. The book is pretty slender, but David Atkinson and Brenda Lewis sing very well indeed, and Jeanmaire is simply enchanting.

SEMI-CLASSICS keep turning up on this desk and I never know how to handle them. What do you say about the *Romantic Stretches for Orchestra* by Prince Camillo di Candriano, paired on a Capitol disc (H-501) in performances by an unidentified symphonic orchestra under George Tzipine? The pieces are entitled *Along the River Neva* and *The Legend of Mariel*, implying that these are travelogues about Russia and Cuba in that order. All I can say is that they are respectable Muzak-type scores, easy to listen to but absolutely without organic identity or harmonic distinction. The same goes for Columbia's ML-4826—Andre Kostelanetz's "opera for orchestra" treatment of *Carmen* (with apologies to Bizet). Undoubtedly there is a place for this sort of thing, but where? Reducing an opera to its orchestral essence does not reduce the opera to its real essence, which had better not be orchestral or it will not linger in the repertory. Skitch Henderson, the affable summer boss of the New York Philharmonic, has whipped up a little program on Capitol L-502 that ranges all the way from the ubiquitous Polka of Shostakovich to the *March of the Siamese Children* from the Rodgers-Hammerstein hit *The King and I*—and incidentally includes a bit of his own called *Courtship*. Nice, easy listening.

POPS is a generic term but the Boston Pops is in a class by itself. For 25 years now the urbane Arthur Fiedler has been turning out one best-seller after another up there, and RCA Victor has noted the auspicious silver anniversary by assembling a 12-inch LP (LM-1790) that samples several

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aspects of the Pops supremacy in the field. There are 16 in all, the gamut running from *Pomp and Circumstance No. 1* and *None but the Lonely Heart* to the *Dagger Dance* from *Natoma* and *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*. In other words, a typical evening in Symphony Hall of a May evening. Emicently listenable, any way you look at it, an dsnspically so in the sonic splendor of New Orthophonic.

STRIKE UP THE BAND: Vox, Vanguard and Westminster have been turning out brass band discs willy-nilly. The Vox group is unidentified but it plays superbly well; on VX-590 the *Radetsky* is as sonorously done as you are apt to hear it. The Vanguard disc (VRS-7006) offers the *Radetsky* also, not quite as excitingly performed but programmatically in much more diversified company (who can take a whole half-hour of German band music?). Westminster's WL-3011 brings back the *Deutschmeister* unit, which always manages to sound better to these ears than any other. And Westminster sound is about the best there is.

—JAS.

A Prophet Passes

(Continued from page 315)

scientific objection, to acknowledge his common cause with the organized creative community. And it is certainly true that, despite his enormous prestige, he shared problems that beset even the least of his contemporaries. Moreover, as Olin Downes has remarked in *The Times*, he lacked "the aggressiveness and efficiency with which a number of our young American composers of the day succeed in promoting their wares." The big problem for all of them, and Ives in particular, is the germination of that initial listener interest which is always the controlling factor in artistic free enterprise. Aaron Copland has stated the issue clearly: "The problem of the audience—not a passive audience but an active one—an audience that demands and rejects music, that acts as a stimulant and a brake, has never been solved. Not every composer deserves such an audience, of course. But for men of the stature of Ives that audience must be found, or American music will never be born." Maybe microgroove will turn the trick, and the easier for Ives now that, in dying, he has fulfilled the first requirement of immortality.

JULY RELEASES

ROBERT SCHUMANN

Symphony No. 3 In E Flat Major
Symphony No. 4 In D Minor
Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera
Conducted by Dean Dixon WL 5285

BEETHOVEN

Violin and Piano Sonata In C Minor,
Op. 30 No. 2
Violin and Piano Sonata In G Major,
Op. 30 No. 3
Jean Fournier—Violin
Ginette Dayen—Piano WL 5292

EMANUEL CHABRIER

Seven Pieces For Piano

CAMILLE SAINT-SAENS

Five Pieces For Piano
Ginette Dayen—Piano WL 5294

PERGOLESI

Concerto No. 1 In G Major
Concerto No. 3 In A Major
Concerto No. 4 In F Minor
Concerto No. 5 In E Flat Major
Winterthur Symphony Orchestra
Conducted by Angela Ephraïm WL 5295

JOSEF HAYDN

String Trio No. 1 In G Major, Op. 53
String Trio No. 2 In B Flat Major,
Op. 53
String Trio No. 3 In D Major, Op. 53

CHARLES H. WILTON

String Trio No. 1 In A Major
String Trio No. 3 In C Major
String Trio No. 6 In F Major
Jean Pougnet—Violin
Frederick Hiddle—Viola
Anthony Pini—Cello WL 5296

CONTINENTAL MEMORIES

Mira Jozelle—Chansonette
Antal Koczé and his Gypsies
The *Deutschmeister* Band
The Westminster Light Orchestra WL 3014

MELODIES YOU REMEMBER

The Westminster Light Orchestra WL 3016



NEW RELEASES for June

BACH: *Cantata No. 65—Sie werden aus Saba alle kommen; Cantata No. 106—Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit*; Roger Wagner Chorale. Lyric. 50.
BACH: *Concertos in C major & C minor for 2 Harpsichords*; Videro, Sorensen, Copenhagen Collegium Musicum Orch. (Frisholm). Haydn Soc. 93.

BACH: *Easter Oratorio*; Soloists, Cho. Pro Musica Chamber Orch. (Grossmann). Vox 8620.

BACH: *Motets—Jesu, meine Freude & Singet dem Herrn*; Vienna Kammerchor (Grossmann). West. 5289.

BACH: *Komm, Jesu, komm*; **SCHUBERT:** *Mass in G*; **BRAHMS:** *Songs*; Robert Shaw Chorale. Vict. LM-1784.

BACH: *St. Matthew Passion*; Soloists, Toronto Mendelssohn Choir & Symphony Orch. (Macmillan). 3-12" Vict. LBC-6101.

BACH: *Sonata in G (Violin & Continuo)*; **HANDEL:** *Sonata No. 5 in A (Violin & Continuo)*; **CORELLI:** *Sonata in G mi., Op. 5 No. 5*; **LECLAIR:** *Sonata in D*; Friedmann, Videro, Declert. Haydn Soc. 95.

BARTOK: *Roumanian Dances*; **TARTINI:** *Sonata in G mi. (Devil's Trill)*; Menuhin & Moore. Vict. LM-1742.

BARTOK: *Sonata for Piano*; **BERG:** *Sonata for Piano*; **HINDEMITH:** *Sonata No. 2 for Piano*; **SCRIABIN:** *Sonata No. 4*; Skolovsky. Col. ML-4871.

BEETHOVEN: *Grosse Fuge, Op. 133; Quartet No. 14 in C sharp minor, Op. 131*; Vegh Quartet. Haydn Soc. 48.

BEETHOVEN: *Quartets, Nos. 1-6, Op. 18*; Vegh Quartet. Haydn Soc. 43, 44, 45.

BEETHOVEN: *Quartets Nos. 7-11, Op. 59, 74, 95*; Vegh Quartet. Haydn Soc. 40, 41, 42.

BEETHOVEN: *Quartets Nos. 12-16, Op. 127, 130, 131, 132, 133, 135*; Haydn Soc. 46, 47, 48, 49.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata No. 5 in F, Op. 24 (Spring)*; *Sonata No. 6 in A, Op. 30, No. 1*; Szegedi & Horszowski. Col. ML-4870.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 4 in B flat, Op. 60*; Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orch. (Krips). London LL-915.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93*; **MENDELSSOHN:** *Symphony No. 5 in D, Op. 107 (Reformation)*; Los Angeles Phil. Orch. (Wallenstein). Decca 9726.

BORODIN: *Polotskian Dances*; **ENESCO:** *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1*; **IPPOLITOV-IVANOV:** *Caucasian Sketches*; Los Angeles Phil. Orch. (Wallenstein). Decca 9727.

BRAHMS: *Concerto No. 1 in D mi., Op. 15*; Backhaus, Vienna Phil. Orch. (Boehm). London LL-911.

BRAHMS: *Double Concerto in A mi., Op. 102*; De Vito, Baldovino, Philharmonia Orch. (Schwarz). HMV 1057.

BRAHMS: *Intermezzo, Op. 117, 118, 119; Rhapsodies, Op. 79, Nos. 1 & 2 and Op. 119, No. 4*; Artur Rubinstein. Vict. LM-1787.

BRAHMS: *Sonata No. 3 in D mi., Op. 108*; **BEETHOVEN:** *Sonata No. 5 in F, Op. 24 (Spring)*; Ferras & Barbizet. Telefunken 66014.

BRITTEN: *A Simple Symphony for Strings*; **IRELAND:** *Concertino Pastorale*; MGM String Orch. (Solomon). MGM-E-3074.

CHARPENTIER: *Midnight Mass*; Paris Vocal Ensemble (Jouve); **VIVALDI:** *Gloria*; Paris Vocal Ens., Concerts Soc. Orch. (Jouve). West. 5287.

CHOPIN: *Bacarelle, Op. 60; Fantasy in F mi., Op. 49; Sonata No. 2, Op. 35*; Ives Nat. Haydn Soc. 97.

CIMAROSA: *Il Maestro di Capella*, Corena (bass), Orch. del Pomeriggi Musicale Milano (Amaducci). London 16" LD-9118.

COPLAND: *Appalachian Spring, Billy the Kid, Fanfare for the Common Man, El Salon Mexico*; Natl. Sym. Orch. (Mitchell). West. 5286.

COUPERIN: *5 Pieces*; **DEBUSSY:** *Homage to Rameau*, **RAMEAU:** *5 Pieces*; **RAVEL:** *La Tombeau de Couperin*; Marcelle Meyer (piano). Haydn Soc. 98.

DOWLAND: *Songs*; Fuller (baritone), de Azpiroz (lute & guitar). EMS 11.

DVORAK: *Piano Quintet in A, Op. 81*; Curzon, Budapest String Quartet. Col. ML-4825.

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 5 in E Mi. (New World)*; Hamburg State Radio Sym. (Schmidt-Isserstedt). Telefunken 66007.

FAURE: *Requiem, Op. 48*; Soloists, Chorus, Lamoureux Orch. (Fournet). Epic 3044.

FRANCK: *Prelude, Chorale & Fugue*; **SCHUMANN:** *Symphonic Etudes*; Katchen. London LL-823.

FRANCK: *Sonata in A*; **PROKOFIEV:** *Sonata in F mi., Op. 80*; Oistrakh & Oborin. Vang. 6019.

FRANCK: *Symphony in D minor*; Vienna Phil. Orch. (Furtwaengler). Lond. LL-967.

GLINKA: *Trio Pathetique*; **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** *Trio in C minor*; Oistrakh, Knushevitsky, Oborin. Con. Hall 1306.

GRANADOS: *Goyescas; El Pelele*; Magaloff (piano). Lond. LL-954.

HANDEL: *Belshazzar*; Soloists, Berlin Chamber Choir & Sym. Orch. (Koch). Bach Guild 534/35.

HANDEL: *Trio Sonatas Nos. 1-4, Op. 5*; L. Frisholm, Kassow, J. Frisholm, Sorenson. Haydn Soc. 85.

HARRISON: *Suite for Violin, Piano & Orch.*; M. & A. Ajemian, Stokowski & Orch.; **WEBER:** B. J. *Symphony on Poems of Wm. Blake, Op. 33*; Gajour, Stokowski & Orch. Vict. LM-1785.

HAYDN: *Quartets Nos. 1-6, Op. 33*; Schneider Quartet. Haydn Soc. Nos. 19, 20, 21.

HAYDN: *Trios No. 4 in E, No. 17 in E flat, No. 21 in F, No. 29 in F*; Fournier, Janigro, Badura-Skoda. West. 5293.

HONEGGER: *Symphony No. 2*; **RIVIER:** *Symphony No. 2 in C*; MGM String Orch. (Solomon). MGM-E3104.

KABALEVSKY: *Colas Breugnot Suite*; **PROKOFIEV:** *The Gambler (4 Portraits)*; Philharmonia Orch. (Schuechter). MGM-E3112.

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KAY: *Concerto for Orchestra; Teatro La Fenice* (Perlea); **LOCKWOOD:** *Concerto for Organ & Brasses*; Mason (organ), Ware, Prager (trumpets), Pulis, Haney (trombones); Quiet Design; Mason (organ). Rem. 199-173.

KETELBY: *In a Chinese Temple Garden; Monastery Garden; Persian Market; The Clock*; Rochester Pops Orch. (Gould). Col. 10" AL-47.

KODALY: *Quartet No. 2, Op. 10*; **SMETANA:** *Quartet in E minor (From my Life)*; Vegh Quartet. Lond. LL-865.

LALO: *Quartet in E flat, Op. 45*; **GOUNOD:** *Quartet No. 3 in A mi*; **DONIZETTI:** *Quartet No. 1 in E flat*; Parrenin Quartet. Strad. 618.

LISZT: *Les Preludes; Hungarian Rhapsodies, Nos. 2, 3 & 6*; Philharmonia Orch. (Schwarz). Bluebird 1070.

LOEILLET: *Sonata in C minor* (Flute, Oboe & Harpsichord); **TELEMAN:** *Sonata in C minor* (Recorder, Oboe & Harpsichord) Itacha Baroque Ensemble. CRS 10" 1011.

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 9; Haydn Symphony No. 9 in D (Miracle)*; Vienna Phil. Orch. (Walter) 21-2" Vict. LCT 6015.

MASCAGNI: *Cavalleria Rusticana*; del Monaco, Nicolai, Chorus, Milan Sym. Orch. (Ghione); **OPERATIC RECITAL** by del Monaco. London 2-12" LL-990/91.

MASCAGNI: *Cavalleria Rusticana*; Calls, di Stefano, La Scala Chorus & Orch. (Serafin). Angel 2-12" 3509.

MENDELSSOHN: *Quartets in E minor and E flat, Op. 44, Nos. 2 & 3*; Endres String Qt. Period 615.

MENDELSSOHN: *Sextet for Piano, Violin, 2 Violas, Cello & Bass, Op. 110*; Presler, Gordon, Sklar, Guilet Quartet Members. MGM-E3107.

MOUSSORGSKY: *The Nursery*; **RACHMANINOFF:** *Songs*; Maria Kurenko. Cap. P-8265.

MOUSSORGSKY: *Pictures at an Exhibition*; **RAVEL:** *La Valse*; Paris Cons. Orch. (Ansermet). London LL-956.

MOZART: *Cassation in G, K. 63*; *Cassation in B flat, K. 99*; Vienna Sym. Orch. (Sacher). Epic 3043.

MOZART: *Piano Concertos No. 23 in A, K. 488 & No. 24 in C minor, K. 491*; Curzon, London Sym. Orch. (Krips). London LL-918.

MOZART: *Serenade No. 10 in B flat, K. 361* RIAS Orch. Wind Ens. Telefunken 66006.

MOZART: *Symphony in G minor, K. 550* **HAYDN:** *Symphony No. 94 in G (Surprise)* NBC Sym. Orch. (Toscanini). Vict. LM-1789.

MOZART: *Symphony in G minor, K. 550* **SCHUBERT:** *Symphony No. 8 (Unfinished)* Vienna State Opera Orca. (Prohaska). Vang. 445.

MOZART: *Piano Trios Nos. 1-6, Clarinet Trio, K. 498*; Trio di Bolzano. Vox 3-12" 8493.

PETRASSI: *Don Quixote (Ballet Suite)*; **RESPIGHI:** *Ancient Airs & Dances for Lute (Suite No. 1)*; Vienna State Opera Orch. (Litschauer). Vang. 447.

PROKOFIEV: *Li. Kije Suite; Love for Three Oranges—March & Scherzo; Romeo and Juliet Suite No. 2*; Boston Sym. Orch. (Koussevitzky). Vict. LCT 1144.

PUCCHINI: *Turandot*; Soloists, Teatro Fenice Venice Chorus & Orca. (Capuana). 3-12" Rem. 199-16913.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *Russian Easter Overture, Op. 36; Antar—Sym. No. 2, Op. 9*; Detroit Sym. Orch. (Paray). Mercury 50028. **SAME COUPLING:** London Sym. Orch. (Scherchen). West. 5280.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *Sheherazade*; Belgian Radiodiffusion Sym. Orch. (Andre).

SCHUBERT: *Die schoene Muellerin*; Munteanu (tenor), Holetschek (piano). West. 5291.

SCHUBERT: *Sonata in G, Op. 78; Sonata in A, Op. 120*; Wuehrer (piano). Vox 8590.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 4 in C mi. (Tragic)*; *Symphony No. 5 in B flat* Los Angeles Phil. Orch. (Wallenstein). Decca 9725.

SCHUMANN: *Fantasy in C, Op. 17; Symphonic Etudes, Op. 13*; Ives Nat (piano). Haydn Soc. 87.

SCHUMANN: *Symphony No. 2 in C, Op. 61*; Stadium Concerts Orch. (Bernstein). Decca 9715.

STRAUSS, Richard: *Till Eulenspiegel, Op. 38*; *Der Rosenkavalier—Waltzes*; Phila. Orch. (Ormandy). Col. AL-46.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *The Nutcracker Ballet* (complete); Minn. Sym. Orch. (Dorati). Mercury 2-12" OL-2-101.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *The Seasons*; Wollmann (piano). West. 5290.

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TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 2; Bolshoi Sym. Orch. (Rachlin)*; **LIADOV:** *Eight Russian Folk Songs*; Youth Sym. Orch. of Moscow Phil. (Kondrashin). A440 1204.

VILLA-LOBOS: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 1* (8 cellos); *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*; Presler (Piano). MGM E3105.

VIVALDI: *12 Concertos for Violin, Strings & Continuo (La Stravaganza)*; Barchet, Elsner, Pro Musica String Orch. (Reinhardt). 3-12" Vox 103.

WAGNER: *Tristan and Isolde—Love Duet*; Moedl, Windgassen, Blatter, Berlin Municipal Opera Orch. (Rother). Telefunken 66004.

WAGNER: *Tristan and Isolde—Love Death*; **BEETHOVEN:** *Fidelio—Leonore's Aria*, Martha Moedl, State Opera Orch., Berlin (Rother). Telefunken 10" 68009.

WEIGL: *Quartet No. 6 in C, Op. 37*, Loewenguth Quartet, *Sonata for Viola, Op. 38*, Doktor, Reisenberg, 3 Songs, Op. 36, Howland (mezzo), Woodstock Quartet. Triad. 1.

ZELLER: *Der Vogelhaendler—Excerpts*, Soloists, Chorus, Bavarian Radio Orch. (Mattes). Telefunken 10" 68008.

Miscellaneous

Anthology of Renaissance Music; Pro Musica Antiqua (Greenberg). Period 597.

Choral Music Concert: Vienna Choir Boys. Col. ML-4873.

Orchestral Music—Boston Pops 25th Anniversary: Boston Pops Orch. (Fiedler). Vict. LM-1790.

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